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Consociational theory and democratic stability
A re-examination
Case Study: Lebanon

By
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A Thesis Submitted
In fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
In Politics

University of Warwick, Department of Politics and International Studies

March 2004

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Acknowledgments

Writing acknowledgments for my dissertation is no easy task, as I am indebted to many individuals who supported me during my research. To the ones who wish to remain anonymous go my deepest thanks for the honest conversations about the “Lebanese problem”. It is still difficult, though, to recall every person who wishes to be named, as many people have crossed my path in the past few years and have left their mark, through their encouragement and interest in my Ph.D. thesis. To the ones who will be inevitably left out because of forgetfulness, but whose enthusiasm I equally appreciate, I wish to plead guilty, for I am only human.

Dr. Sami Baroudi, at the Lebanese American University, Beirut, deserves special thanks for encouraging me to pursue a Ph.D. I would also like to thank Dr. Nawaf Kabbara, at the University of Balamand, Tripoli, for discussing my early ideas on the research. I wish to acknowledge Professor Arend Lijphart, at the University of California, San Diego, for sharing with me his most recent thoughts on my topic. Nadim Shehadi generously opened the library doors of the Oxford Centre for Lebanese Studies and put its contents at my disposal, in typical “Lebanese hospitality” fashion. I extend special thanks to him for that. I am equally grateful to the Department of Politics and International Studies at the University of Warwick and its cooperative staff, for helping fund two trips to the British Library, London. A word of thanks goes to Nour Richard, who provided part of the material in French and Maha Shouayb, who also kindly helped with material collection.

I am greatly indebted to my doctoral supervisors, Dr. Barbara Allen Roberson and Dr. Peter Ferdinand, for their patience, comments and constructive criticism. Without their guidance and feedback, this dissertation would not have materialised. I have been exceptionally fortunate to work under their joint supervision, for they have helped me shape my ideas on the research at hand as well as develop my interest in Lebanese politics and better understand the context in which I was writing my dissertation. Dr. Ferdinand’s guidance on the construction and crucial aspects of the Ph.D. thesis as well as his insightful suggestions proved invaluable. Dr. Roberson’s words of wisdom, attention to detail and knowledge made the task challenging and enlightening. For all that and for the long discussions about Lebanese politics, I am truly grateful.

Warm thanks also go to Amra and David Bone, and their lovely family, for being my kind friends and generous hosts. Amra and David offered moral support and parental advice at critical moments, of which there were many. I wish to thank them for considering me both a member and a friend of their family. Particularly, I want to record my gratitude to Ayman whose contagious smile and baby affection kept me going on during the toughest moments. My thanks are also due to Dr. Peter Byrd,

for his support in accommodation matters and to Peter-James White and his loving family, for being who they are and for making my life in the U.K. easier. I cannot thank my close Lebanese friends enough, as their “familiarity” with the topic made the writing process more pleasant. Equally, the interest that my friends/flatmates from Warwick University showed in my research over the years proved out to be an important incentive to work and I have benefited from the discussions that inevitably followed. Here, I wish to acknowledge Eileen Ting.

Most importantly, my deepest gratitude goes to members of my family, on whom I relied during all stages of the research process. I am profoundly grateful to my parents, Hind Soufi and Kanaan Assaf, to whom I owe everything I am and will ever be. I can never repay them back what they have endowed me with, in terms of lasting financial and emotional support, unconditional love and unfailing faith. Their countless sacrifices have not gone unappreciated. Particularly, my mother deserves special thanks for continuously prompting me and motivating me to wrap up my dissertation and for making the whole process of doing so feasible. Finally, I wish to dedicate the present thesis to the memory of my grandmother, Fātima Al-Zahrāa Miqāti, who was a source of inspiration to the many around her and whose life was a model of faith.

Abstract

The present thesis re-assesses the utility of the theory of consociational democracy as a prescriptive conflict-regulation mechanism for plural societies, by re-examining the significance of the so-called causative/positive relationship between consociationalism and democratic stability. This re-assessment is based on a twin-fold examination of the internal constructs and logic of consociational theory, their political/economic procedural aspects and their societal manifestations. This examination is undertaken in two complex historical contexts, pre-war and post-war Lebanon. Mainly, the internal weaknesses of the theory have to do with its inherently flawed assumptions and the imprecise definitions of its main components, which make it problematic to analytically and empirically establish a causative link between consociationalism and democratic stability. Thus, to undertake a meaningful discussion of the ability of consociationalism to deliver on the promise of democratic stability, the thesis elaborates on the definitions of the main components and concepts of consociational theory (as they relate to the Lebanese context). It also examines their relations to democratic theory. Equally, starting with the observations that many countries of the world adopt consociational practices and mechanisms of rule and that consociational theory continues to receive significant scholarly attention, the continuous development and elaboration of the consociational model appear to be a way of alleviating the weaknesses of the theory and expanding its prescriptive power. Hence, particular emphasis is placed on an original elaboration of the definition, concept and representative scope of the grand coalition for two major reasons. First, this is so in the light of the centrality of the notion of elites and their role in consociational democracies (consociationalism being an actor-centered model). Second, this is the case in the light of the fact that executive decision-making power effectively lies within the ruling grand coalition. Based on the complex societal stage on which the thesis unfolds, (i.e., the Lebanese context), the findings of the thesis reveal that the consociational model of democracy is at times unable in very many ways to operate as the consociational theory of democracy suggests. Most importantly for the purposes of the present dissertation, the Lebanese experiments with consociationalism reveal that the model is unable at times to prevent the outbreak of communal conflict involving violence. Furthermore, it does not seem to work properly without a heavy dose of internal mediation and external arbitration. Additionally, it prevents the Lebanese state and social systems from reaching the political maturity necessary for stability. In other words, the Lebanese consociational structure of governance appears to work effectively at ensuring relative stability only if it is continuously assisted by additional mechanisms of conflict-regulation (those of mediation and arbitration). Indeed, the Lebanese consociational model functions relatively well when it borrows from the above-mentioned mechanisms provided by the literature on conflict regulation in plural societies. As such, consociationalism's so-called ability to deliver, alone, on the promise of democratic stability for Lebanon's plural society is seriously questioned.

**‘It is the Souvenir of the Past which constitutes the Nationality of a People’,
De Barante;
quoted in “*The Entente Cordiale in Lebanon*”, (Tyan Ferdinand, 1917).**

Chapter 1 Introduction

A decade ago, McGarry and O’Leary cited genocide, forced mass-population transfers, partition and/or secession, integration and/or assimilation as methods for eliminating differences in plural societies. Also cited by these authors as being methods for managing differences were hegemonic control, arbitration (third-party intervention), cantonisation and/or federalisation, consociationalism or power sharing (McGarry & O’Leary 1993, 4). The authors also referred to inter-community domination, communal divorce, expulsion, the suppression of violence, repression, and attempts to depoliticise conflicts between communities as being equally important in the literature of conflict regulation. One such conflict-regulating mechanism that this thesis proposes to look in detail at is that of the consociational device. In this respect, Dahl observes that ‘one solution that has proved successful in several countries is “consociational democracy”’ (Dahl 1989, 256). Consociationalists, in particular the noted political scientist, Arend Lijphart, argue that the consociational model of democracy is a counteractive mechanism, able to prevent the outbreak of communal conflict, as well as create and maintain a stable democracy within a plural society. Consociationalism has been credited with having ‘acquired a unique characteristic of universality in terms of application to many fragmented polities of various types...’ (Falaiye 1990, 1) and ‘in the course of one decade...has obtained its own domain in political theory, research, and engineering’ (Van Schendelen 1984, 30).

This thesis re-examines and re-assesses the ability of the consociational model of democracy to prevent the outbreak of communal conflict, as well as to generate and maintain a stable democracy within multi-communal and unstable societies. It examines the appropriateness of the model for such societies and, by extension, the utility of consociational theory. The central argument developed herein, throughout the thesis, is that the consociational model fails, in many instances, to deliver on the promise of stable democracy for plural societies. Hence, the different chapters of this thesis will critically question the supposedly causative (i.e., positive) relationship between consociationalism and democratic stability. This will be done by looking at various aspects of consociationalism through the Lebanese lens. Indeed, taking the Lebanese political system as a critical case study appears pertinent to the purposes of this thesis, as Lebanon’s mode of political organisation is thought to fit the description of the consociational model. Hence, by exploring and explaining the workings and manifestations of the Lebanese consociational model of democracy, this thesis will serve to shed more light on the internal logic and assumptions of consociational theory itself, and hence, its utility.

Chapter 2 reviews and further develops the criticisms that were proffered against consociational theory, mainly in terms of the conceptual broadness and imprecision of the four components of the consociational model of democracy, as well as other key concepts of the theory. Chapter 2 also reassesses the explanatory power of those favourable factors thought (by consociationalists) to assist and sustain consociational politics. Additionally, critical emphasis is placed in this chapter on the contention that consociational theory explains what conditions elite co-operation and what determines power sharing and consensus within a given plural society. The examination of this contention is shown to question the internal logic of the theory, which relies heavily on elite accommodationist behaviour as a condition for system stability and for creating and maintaining a stable democracy. Hence, these issues will constitute the main discussion of Chapter 2, which deals with the internal weaknesses and shortcomings of the theory. Chapter 2 will also include a brief discussion of critical case studies (where relevant) that provide valuable analytical and empirical critiques of consociational theory. Towards the end of this chapter, the discussion will turn to the weaknesses and gaps in consociational literature. It will point to the need of the present study to undertake three important tasks for any meaningful discussion and assessment of the ability of consociationalism to deliver on the promise of democratic stability for plural societies.

Unless more precise definitions are adopted, it is difficult to undertake an examination of the relationship of consociationalism to democratic theory, so as to determine whether the model succeeds in generating democratic stability. This is particularly the case because it is not clear from the consociational literature what is meant by the concepts to which consociational theory refers. Hence, Chapter 2 identifies the need to define more adequately the key concepts of consociational theory (a task undertaken in Chapter 3). Moreover, this thesis is guided by the pragmatically fundamental realisation that consociationalism is often resorted to because of the lack of any feasible alternative and in many instances, imposed by conditions of crisis. Thus, the point of departure of this thesis is that an elaboration of the key component of the consociational model (i.e., elite rule through the principle of grand coalition) is one way of enhancing the prospects for consociationalism generating and maintaining democratic stability, as well as prospects for the model operating in plural societies, and hence, promoting the utility of consociationalism. Hence, the various discussions undertaken in Chapter 2 point to the need for this thesis to introduce an elaboration of the consociational model (a task also undertaken in Chapter 3).

Central to the notion of consociational democracy is the dominant role that the elite plays in ruling and decision-making. In order to succeed in showing the absence of a definite positive relationship between consociationalism and democratic stability, this thesis has to address the theories of elite behaviour in order to locate the impact and weight of the leaders of different communal groups on

the decision making process, and the implementation of the system. Thus, Chapter 3 first elaborates on the definitions of the key concepts of the theory as they relate to the societal stage on which this thesis unfolds. It provides/identifies a theoretical framework within which consociationalism operates (i.e., for the investigation of the operability of the model), and introduces/proposes a refinement of the theory to help alleviate the operational and procedural shortcomings of the model. Through a detailed examination of all four consociational principles, Chapter 3 examines the relations of consociationalism to democratic theory, highlighting the model's extremely elitist nature and its failure to generate democratic stability for plural societies. The links between consociationalism and democracy are critically examined, pointing to the undemocratic nature of the former and to the impact this has on prospects for democratic stability. Chapter 3 also points to the limitations of the model in many respects that are essential for modernisation, development and nation-building, and hence system stability. These limitations are best seen by looking at the procedural shortcomings of the consociational model in action. Chapter 3 concludes by looking at the alternative approaches for dealing with problems in the organisation of political rule that plural societies face, bringing out the similarities and differences between these and consociationalism, and assessing their significance for the present study.

As regards the concerns of this thesis, it is important to note that the breakdown of the pre-war Lebanese political system in 1975 forms the basis upon which to evaluate the capacity of consociational theory to act as a conflict-regulation method in plural societies, and more importantly, as a system capable of generating and maintaining democratic stability. Consequently, an examination of the pre-war Lebanese experiment with consociationalism (undertaken in Chapter 4) is necessary so as to determine the underlying causes of this breakdown and the failure of the consociational model on the promise of democratic stability for Lebanon's plural society. Such an examination requires a closer look at the 1926 Lebanese Constitution, the 1943 National Pact, the conduct of politics during the 1943-1975 period and the internal and external strains that operated on the system. Chapter 4 argues that the highly elitist nature of the model translated into a hegemonic system of government and failed to preserve the internal order within the country, ultimately leading to the outbreak of communal violence and the 1975-1990 civil war. Indeed, though power was shared by a narrow governing elite essentially composed of the Maronite Christian and Sunni Muslim community leaders, pre-war Lebanon was characterised by a Maronite-dominated hegemonic form of consociationalism as a result of the substantial amount of political power granted to the office of the Presidency, itself controlled by the Maronite community. The examination illustrates in practical ways the fact that an elaboration of the model in terms of the executive grand coalition (introduced in Chapter 3) is much-needed as the pre-war consociational system in Lebanon shows how the narrow scope of the grand coalition, which conforms to the

concept as it is devised by Lijphart, has translated into a hegemonic presidential system of rule that led to the outbreak of the war, together with other factors.

Chapter 4 examines consociational politics in Lebanon from 1943-1975, and their inability to prevent the outbreak of the Lebanese civil war, 1975-1990. This chapter examines consociational practices, their functions and how they operate. A brief historical review points to the birth of consociational principles, identified in an emerging tradition of elite accommodation based on shifting and temporary alliances of interests. The principal articles of the constitution point to the consolidation of consociational principles. The elements of the pact, as well as the conduct of politics, later reveal significant procedural deviations from the consociational model in terms of a departure from consociational principles, as well as numerous violations of consociational politics. These deviations are treated as procedural manifestations of the consociational model, which ultimately manifested themselves when the latter came into operation. Chapter 4 also examines the particular nature of pre-war Lebanese society by looking at the considerably detrimental impact consociational politics had on the stability of the system where the latter no longer accommodated multiple converging (internal and external) strains. The argument that is made is that political instability (resulting from consociational politics) has had important effects on societal stability. Chapter 4 concludes by a recapitulative focus on the main research question of this thesis, the so-called causative relationship between consociationalism and democratic stability, i.e., for the purposes of Chapter 4, the nature of the link between pre-war Lebanese consociationalism and democratic stability.

At this stage, it should be mentioned that a revised consociational formula was devised to meet regionally turbulent conditions of crisis and internally new realities. Such temporary conditions that brought about this revised formula were compelling enough so that in the end, the formula effectively provided a common (though minimal) entente ground to end the fifteen-year civil war, thereby giving credibility to consociational theory and indicating the need for this thesis to examine the post-war Lebanese political system from 1990 onwards. The current second experiment with consociationalism that Lebanon is undertaking is one way of examining how the revised consociational formula, which conforms to the proposed elaboration of the model suggested in Chapter 3, has so far not generated democratic stability for Lebanon's plural society, despite its relative stability since 1990. Indeed, the improved consociational formula and its effective translation into action suggest that prospects for democratic stability have improved. While the previous pre-war formula, which conforms to Lijphart's highly elitist definition of the grand coalition, resulted in a hegemonic system of government, rather than a consociational one, the current formula, conforming to the elaboration of the notion of grand coalition developed in

Chapter 3, translates into a less elitist system of government, but one symbolised by the emergence of the troika rule, involving a significant amount of internal mediation and Syrian external arbitration. Indeed, post-war Lebanon is characterised by a consociational troika power-sharing system where the Maronite president, the Sunni prime minister and the Shi'i Muslim parliament speaker govern with internal as well as external assistance and support. Hence, it appears that the consociational model either translates into a highly elitist hegemonic system of political organisation where one communal group dominates, or takes the form of a consociational elitist system supported by excessive internal mediation among the various poles of power as well as outside intervention in the form of arbitration designed to maintain the stability of the system. Internal mediation refers to the truce-making and conflict-resolution efforts that government officials (ministers and parliamentarians...) engage in to remedy to the political bickering among the three poles of power, while these elites should be in fact assuming their own functions and responsibilities (i.e., ministers handling their government portfolios and parliamentarians studying legislative reforms instead of acting as conflict-regulators). External arbitration refers to the constant impetus from the Syrian regime in assisting Lebanese elites in their governing of the country and making sure that the consociational constitution and consociational mechanisms of rule are applied. It would thus appear that the consociational model prevents the Lebanese state system and society from reaching political maturity, necessary for stability.

In other words, the divisive societal context that consociationalism fosters coupled with the model's reliance on human institutions of governance (it being an elitist actor-centered model) makes an awareness among the elites (and the fragmented mass) as regards what constitutes national interest difficult to emerge. Hence, since this situation puts the stability and cohesiveness of the country at risk, it points to an insufficient level of political maturity. As a result, third parties, usually neighbouring countries, (whose security may be threatened), assist in the governance of the consociational country since local elites are unable to act in a politically mature fashion (i.e., in a responsible way, hence requiring outside supervision and control in the command and administration of the country). In this respect, this thesis introduces a new original dimension to the understanding of the failure of consociationalism to generate democratic stability, and points to the need to borrow additional conflict-regulating mechanisms from the literature on conflict-regulation, so as to assist the devices of the consociational model in preventing the outbreak of conflict and maintaining a relative degree of stability in plural societies. Otherwise, the system seems to translate into a hegemonic mode of political rule outlined in Chapter 4.

A detailed examination of this revised consociational framework, (the 1989 Ta'if Agreement which was subsequently formally incorporated in the Lebanese Constitution), is undertaken in Chapter 5.

One of the aims of this chapter is to examine how adequate the revised formula is, and in what respects it relates precisely to the consociational model, in order to determine its relationship to democratic stability. The chapter argues that the revised formula has so far not generated democratic practices and stability, a central concern of this thesis. The chapter describes in detail the Ta'if Accord, and explains the constitutional amendments undertaken. It further points to the drawbacks and inadequacies of the agreement. Additionally, the chapter examines the lingering political problems in the post-Ta'if era, and points to the impact of political instability on the long-term stability of the society. The discussion further addresses the inability of consociational politics under the Ta'if Accord framework to deal with the long-term problems of the polity. The unimplemented provisions of the Ta'if Agreement are very briefly highlighted in order to suggest the difficulties and obstacles that lie in implementing these provisions. This is because the consociational structure of government effectively blocks moves in that direction. The findings of Chapter 5 are outlined at the end and suggest that such a situation does not positively predispose the country towards reaching democratic stability, nor does it allow the state and society systems to reach political maturity, necessary for stability.

Chapter 6, the concluding chapter, reviews and summarises the major findings of the thesis, and brings the threads of analysis together by assessing the validity of the interpretations that have been given in the various discussions, i.e., the conclusions regarding consociational theory, the implications of the present study and the effectiveness of the consociational model of rule for Lebanon. It also offers insights into the future prospects for Lebanon's stability, whilst examining what lessons Lebanon's political system offers for conflict management and the governance of plural societies other than Lebanon. Chapter 6, thus, sets the present study within the context of current research.

This thesis acknowledges the valuable contributions of the considerable amount of literature on consociationalism and on Lebanon's political system. However, it is the contention of this author that this body of literature more often than not is concerned with the broad characteristics of Lebanese consociationalism and the general classification of Lebanon's system of rule. There is as yet no systematic study devoted exclusively to examine the various aspects of Lebanese consociationalism, its procedural manifestations in Lebanon's state and society and its realistic chances of success in delivering on the promise of democratic stability in the Lebanese context. It is hoped that the present study will throw some light on these issues by going into the details of Lebanon's brand of consociationalism, focusing on its most important feature, executive grand coalition decision-making, and the latter's relation to democratic stability. The assessment of the ability of consociationalism's effective institutions of rule, i.e., communal elites, to generate

democratic stability is critically examined and worthwhile, for it offers original insights as to possible elaborations of the consociational model, which suggest that an elaborated model has more chances to work as the theory suggests, hence enhancing the utility of consociational theory.

The various discussions in this thesis draw upon secondary resources such as books, articles in journals and reviews, and daily articles in local and foreign newspapers, as well as online published material. Additionally, a limited number of primary resources, such as official governmental documents and official speeches, United Nations publications and local television interviews with decision-makers and economic analysts will be utilised.

Chapter 2 Lijphart's consociational theory

In line with the main orientation of this thesis, (i.e., its focus on consociational theory and the latter's promise of stable democracy for divided societies), this chapter will introduce the model of consociational democracy, critically analyse the theory of consociationalism and evaluate the utility of this theory. In other words, the aim of this chapter is to assess the intellectual validity of consociational theory in order to end up with some judgement that is implied by the research question of this dissertation. Thus, these objectives call for this chapter to examine the internal constructs and logic of this theory, as well as the assumptions and implications contained in the theory and its consistency, before relating it to democratic theory and its utility in the Lebanese context in subsequent chapters.

Lijphart's consociational democracy came about as a result of his belief in the necessity of identifying, elaborating and refining Almond's 1956 typology of democracies. He agreed with Almond that instability was to be expected in culturally heterogeneous societies, those 'divided by mutually reinforcing cleavages'. However, he pointed to the need for a new category within Almond's typology of democracies. One that he framed subsequently is as follows: the model of heterogeneous society/stable democracy. At first, Lijphart used the word 'politics of accommodation'. Later, in a 1968 *World Politics* article called "Consociational Democracy", he used the term 'consociationalism'. The term was derived from Althusius' 1603 article in *Politica Methodice Digesta*, entitled "Concept of Consociatio". Althusius, a political theorist, defined the Latin term 'Consociatio' as 'a community of common destiny, cooperative' or 'to associate in an alliance' (Lijphart 1977 quoted in Sisk 1996). Lijphart points out that though Althusius 'coined' the term, 'Althusius was mainly an early federalist thinker and he cannot be regarded as a consociationalist'. According to the author, Lewis 'is clearly the intellectual originator of the theory' (Lijphart 1995b, 278).

However, most literature on consociationalism refers to Lijphart as 'the most productive and *imaginative*¹ author' (Van Schendelen 1984, 28) or the major contributor to the theory of consociational democracy: 'Although Lijphart is not the originator of the concept of consociational democracy, he is given much credit for its theoretical development. His contribution to the theory remains monumental, both in terms of its potential for replicability and as a mechanism for conflict resolution in plural societies' (Falaiye 1990, 67). Indeed, a discussion of Lijphart's development of consociational theory is important not only because he is considered to be the major contributor to

¹ Emphasis added.

the elaboration of the theory, as Falaiye points out above, but rather because, as Halpern reveals, the theory departs from commonplace scepticism regarding the attainment of stable democracy in divided societies. Indeed, Halpern writes:

In the twentieth century, the prevalence of subcultural conflicts based upon race, language, religion, and ethnicity have rendered this skepticism [the dangers that subcultural differences pose for democracy] commonplace (...) the possibility of maintaining stable democracy in a subculturally fragmented state appeared to political theorists to be remote at best. *For this reason alone*,² the publication of Arend Lijphart's theory of consociational democracy might have attracted attention: unlike its pessimistic predecessors, this theory purports to demonstrate how stable democracy can be maintained in divided states (Halpern 1984, 1).³

Thus, in the light of Lijphart's significant analytical and empirical contributions to the introduction and development of consociational theory to the field of political science, this chapter will proceed to critically examine the model, as devised by Lijphart, in an attempt to determine whether it delivers on the promise of stable democracy, as he explicitly states. Whether the theory is 'overtly optimistic'⁴ in its promise of stable democracy for divided societies (including deeply divided ones) will be discussed throughout the different chapters of this thesis in a series of steps.

Numerous studies since the publication of Lijphart's 1968 article have focused specifically, and indeed critically on the internal constructs of the theory of consociational democracy, thus limiting the utility of the model. The aim of this chapter is not to reiterate such criticisms. Rather, the examination of the internal constructs of the theory is useful for the purposes of this thesis because the vagueness and imprecision of the key components and concepts of the model as well as the theory's very broadly-defined elite tasks, will be shown to further impede the application of the model to the governance of the divided societies of the twentieth century. Indeed, whereas previously, democracy was considered in institutional and procedural terms, today current research emphasis appears to be based on the notion of governance. In the light of the extremely elitist nature of consociational democracy and thus, the centrality of the concept of the elites for the model and its validity, an examination of the internal flaws of the theory is bound to reveal additional constraints with regard to the utility of the model as a prescriptive conflict-regulation mechanism in today's divided societies. As such, a review of the internal constructs of the theory appears relevant to current research on the organisation of political rule and the governance of plural societies.

² Emphasis added. Van Schendelen argues similarly stating that 'Lijphart's original contribution to the political science literature has been...his formulation of [the above mentioned] paradox..' (Van Schendelen 1984, 28).

³ The author also notes that the influence of Lijphart's work is apparent 'not only in the marked rise...in the interest of political scientists...but also in the central place the theory has been afforded...in the many references to it...in the numerous journal articles...and by its application to a plethora of cases...' (Halpern 1984, 3).

⁴ In the words of Halpern, 'consociationalism is an expressly hopeful theory' (Halpern 1984, 354).

A re-assessment of consociational theory would be incomplete if without critically examining the definitions of the four components, as well as the key concepts of the theory, the impact of the eight background conditions on the establishment of consociational practices and the ability of the elite to create and maintain consociational practices. First, the chapter will look at the imprecise and varying definition of the four components of consociational democracy. Following this, it will address the problem of vagueness of the key concepts of consociational theory. Third, it will attempt to determine the explanatory power of the factors thought to sustain consociational politics. Fourth, it will critically examine the tasks of the elite in maintaining consociational practices, tasks that the consociational model prescribes as conditions for achieving a stable democracy in a divided society. The final section will point to the existing gaps in the literature on consociationalism, indicating the necessary tasks needed to fill them, and thus setting the agenda for the remainder of this thesis.

A. The four components of consociational democracy

Lijphart defines consociational democracy in terms of four basic principles. The two 'primary characteristics' are grand coalition (that is, the sharing of executive power) and group, or segmental autonomy. As to the two 'secondary characteristics' or what Lijphart sometimes calls supplementary principles, these are proportionality and mutual, or minority veto (Lijphart 2000b).

The first principle, that of executive power-sharing, is a 'government by a grand coalition of the political leaders of all significant segments of the divided society' (Lijphart 1986, 35). The second consociational principle, that of segmental or community autonomy, or a high degree of autonomy for the segments of the plural society, prescribes the delegation of as much decision-making as possible to the separate segments (Lijphart 1986, 35). In other words, on all issues of common concern, decisions should be made jointly by the representatives of the main segments. Meanwhile, 'on all other issues, decision-making should be left to each segment' (Lijphart 1995b, 278) which, in effect, means self-government on issues of 'most profound concern' (McGarry 1994). The third consociational component is proportionality. This is considered 'the basic standard of political representation, civil service appointments and allocation of public funds' (Lijphart 1995b, 278). The objective of the principle is to guarantee the fair representation of minority segments, and its scope runs throughout the public sector. The fourth component is mutual or minority veto rights on vital issues and constitutional change. Mutual veto 'guarantees to each segment that it will not be outvoted by the majority when its vital interests are at stake' (Lijphart 1986, 35). The concerns that were mainly raised over the conceptual broadness of these definitions point out that such broadness

makes it problematic to use the model to describe the political system of particular states, as the following sections will show.

1. Defining a set of components

First and foremost, a secondary but nonetheless important issue requires attention. That is, the number of the components of consociational democracy varied over time. Originally, the theory, as Lijphart conceived it, comprised the presence of five components, the fifth of which was a plural, deeply divided society, to use Lijphart's words. However, the author, in more recent work, defined the theory in terms of the four principles discussed earlier, and abandoned the fifth component. For instance, Lijphart writes that his definitions of consociational democracy in terms of the components:

were conflicting over time. In my more recent work, I have tended to define it in terms of the four characteristics...In earlier work, there was a fifth defining element, namely that of a plural, deeply divided, society. Fortunately, I think that the problems caused by these partly contradicting definitions (...) can be remedied easily- by simply dropping the earlier definition (...) Generally speaking, whenever there is a difference between earlier and later formulations, I stand behind the later and reject the earlier ones (Lijphart 2000a, 426).

In this respect, three observations should be made. First, the lack of a precise defining set of the principles of consociational theory over time (from 1968 and onwards) and the ensuing confusion make it difficult for scholars studying the model to use it to describe the political system of a particular state. They also make it equally difficult to refute the nomination of particular cases as consociational democracies, as the lengthy scholarly debate over the classification of the Netherlands as a consociational democracy suggests.⁵

Second, though Lijphart dropped the fifth element, he does not distinguish between plural societies and divided, or deeply divided societies. For him, a society that comprises plural segments is necessarily a divided, or deeply divided, society. He does not take into account the possibility of a plural but homogeneous society. Third, Lijphart's assumption that 'only the consociational model can remedy to the problems that plural and divided societies face' is not justified by sufficient evidence. These last two issues are discussed at length later in separate sections of this chapter.⁶

⁵ See section A.3. in this chapter.

⁶ See sections B.4. and D. in this chapter.

2. Defining the four components

The second problem identified by researchers on consociationalism relates to Lijphart's definitions of the four components of consociational democracy themselves. Their conceptual broadness makes it difficult to identify consociational characteristics in a given country, to argue that the latter's political system is consociational and consequently (and perhaps more importantly), to hold that it is consociational politics that can explain the stability of the system or in many cases, its breakdown. This last issue is of critical importance, as it is the central research question of this thesis.

As Halpern points out, 'the problem of the disorderly consociational universe lies within the construction of the theory of consociational democracy and not within the cases that theory has been used to describe. An examination of the constructs of the theory reveals that the inconsistencies exhibited by the cases are attributable to the faulty and imprecise concepts upon which consociational theory is based' (Halpern 1986, 181). In her doctoral thesis, Halpern elaborates on this point, writing that 'such concepts which impede the model from functioning at the lowest level of theory, that of classification, also prevent its application at any higher level' (Halpern 1984, Abstract). Clearly, this adds an element of confusion and uncertainty to any attempt to classify the political systems of plural/unstable societies as consociational, hence, undermining, in some cases, the internal consistency of the consociational model, and thus its utility.

a. Grand coalition

The first principle, that is, executive power-sharing, is a 'government by a grand coalition of the political leaders of all significant segments of the divided society' (Lijphart 1986, 35). Lijphart does not specify the form it takes. Rather, he points out that a grand coalition may take a 'variety of institutional forms': 'The grand coalition can be a cabinet in a parliamentary system, or a coalitional arrangement of a president and other top-office holders in a presidential system of government' (Lijphart 1995b, 277-79). In later work, Lijphart defines grand coalition as not so much any particular arrangement as the participation by the leaders of all significant segments in governing a plural society. This definition can be seen as problematic in two important respects.

First, Halpern makes the case that Lijphart's notion of grand coalition is 'a catch-all concept, describing any joint governmental or quasi-governmental activity pursued by segmental élites whether they undertake that activity as bloc representatives or not, or engage at all in "summit diplomacy"' (Halpern 1986, 190). Halpern argues that 'since the essence of consociational

democracy is power-sharing, the site of the grand coalition would appear to be restricted to those legislative and executive institutions where governance is traditionally undertaken, institutions that enable the segmental leaders to govern together. As Lijphart conceives it, however, grand coalition is not limited to particular institutional settings or even to governing bodies' (Halpern 1986, 189). According to Halpern, failing to discern where grand coalition exercises governance leaves considerable freedom to the model: 'The researcher using the model as a guide is thereby encouraged towards creativity, not exactitude- towards identifying grand coalition somewhere within the folds of a state's political fabric' (Halpern 1986, 190).

Second, particularly noteworthy and troubling in Lijphart's definition of the concept of grand coalition is his use of the word 'significant'. In the light of the important role of elites in the consociational model, and hence the centrality of elite governance as a determining factor in the operability of the model in a divided (and deeply divided) societal context, some questions that arise are as follows: What is not a significant segment of the divided society, and more importantly who/what decides what is not a significant segment of the divided society? What criteria determine significant segments as opposed to insignificant segments? Indeed, it can be said that there is a tension between consociationalism's emphasis on communal groups as the cornerstone of the divided society (rather than groups based on more fluid identities or individuals) and the use of the concept of 'significant' segments. If consociationalism is defined in terms of an effective conflict-regulating mechanism and organisational structure of political rule between the communal groups of the divided society, the assumption/expectation is that all groups of the divided society are represented at the executive decision-making level. Furthermore, there is a tension between consociationalism's promise to secure the rights of minority groups (through the veto concept) and the use of the word 'significant'. Indeed, it is not clear how minority groups can exercise the veto right if they are not represented at the executive, decision-making level.

This is particularly a cause of concern because of the existing interdependence between the four components of consociational democracy as a condition for the operability of the model. Indeed, the operability of the model is dependent not only on each component alone, but rather, on their interaction, which aims to organise a divided society into an acceptable manner to all its groups. Thus, in the light of the equally broadly defined three remaining components of consociational theory, the operability of the model is further restrained. In short, the lack of a precise definition of grand coalition engenders a broadness whereby consociational theory becomes stretchable, and can therefore include many cases that do not exhibit consociational characteristics, displaying instead cooperation incentives at the governmental level. This in turn adds an element of vagueness and

inexactitude to the theory of consociational democracy, hence raising serious concerns over the utility and operability of the model in a divided societal context.

b. Segmental autonomy

The second consociational principle, that is, segmental autonomy, or a high degree of autonomy for the segments of the plural society, prescribes the delegation of as much decision-making as possible to separate segments (Lijphart 1986, 35). According to Lijphart, 'it complements the grand coalition principle' (Lijphart 1987, 137): On all issues of common concern, the decisions should be made jointly by the representatives of the segments. On all other issues, decision-making should be left to each segment (Lijphart 1995b, 277-8). Equally, it may be argued that there is a tension between the concept of a grand coalition and that of segmental autonomy. Though Lijphart cites the freedom for segments to run their own schools and other ideological instruments, Halpern notes that segmental autonomy is, like the other components of consociational democracy, 'informal. It suffers from an imprecision...' (Halpern 1986, 192). Indeed, it is very important to point to the problematic nature of the definition of segmental autonomy as conceived by Lijphart.

Under the vague framework he designs, it is not clear which issues are considered to be of common concern and which ones are of group or community concern. Lijphart does not exactly specify which issues should be dealt with at the group level and which issues should be addressed by the elite cartel. He only mentions 'trifling issues' as opposed to 'vital interests' (Lijphart 1987, 138). This is seen as problematic because it is sometimes the case that both 'common' and 'other' concerns, to use Lijphart's words, overlap, in the sense that they are at the same time common and group concerns. Hence, this makes it difficult for scholars to determine where decision-making lies, or should lie, at the group level or at the elite cartel level concerning some domestic issues, as well as regional and international matters. This is especially the case with those that may have domestic repercussions.⁷ This becomes particularly problematic because the separatism of consociationalism indirectly encourages segments to seek outside support so as to foster their local presence and position within society. Hence, scholars studying the model face the difficulty of determining in which realm decision-making on crucial issues should lie. It is often the case that concerns are viewed as crucial at both the elite cartel level and the group level. Though there are other more important shortcomings of the theory, this inexactitude paves a way for different interpretations from researchers studying the model.

⁷ Similarly, as will be illustrated in Chapters 4 and 5, the vulnerability of Lebanon's domestic scene to regional and international developments lends support to this argument.

c. Proportionality

The third consociational component of Lijphart's theory is proportionality, and is considered the basic consociational standard of political representation, civil service appointments and allocation of public funds: 'As a principle of political representation, it is especially important as a guarantee for the fair representation of minority segments' (Lijphart 1995b, 278). Concerning elections, Lijphart suggests that 'proportional results in elections may be achieved by the various systems of formal proportional representation (PR) or by several non-PR methods...' (Lijphart 1995b, 279).

Commenting on this component, Halpern considers Lijphart's assumption when defining proportionality 'a faulty assumption. It would hold only where the party-system, as a reflection of the social system, is organised to articulate subcultural interests'. Halpern notes that 'party strength is not necessarily the same as subcultural strength' (Halpern 1986, 191). Indeed, Steiner broadens the concept of proportionality by arguing that it seems 'meaningful to apply [it] to the political decision-making process as a whole' rather than using it only in connection with electoral law. He notes that 'in this broadened sense' proportionality denotes 'certain models of conflict regulation' (Steiner 1971, 63). In this respect, it can be argued that the definition, as conceived by Lijphart, does not provide any exact formula for the allocation of power and seats to the different segments. This can easily lead to resentment between the different segments.⁸

d. Mutual veto

Mutual or minority veto is designed to protect the vital interests of the minority segments. 'When a minority's vital interests are at stake, the veto provides essential protection' (Lijphart 1995b, 278): 'The minority veto can be either an absolute or a suspensive veto, and it may be applied either to all decisions or to only certain specified kinds of decisions, such as matters of culture and education' (Lijphart 1995b, 279). Concerning this fourth component of consociational democracy, Halpern argues that Lijphart is again unwilling 'to prescribe the form and forum it should take' (Halpern 1986, 190-1). The author holds that there is a great deal of uncertainty concerning this component.

Additionally, the above-mentioned imprecision of the concept of segmental autonomy has a direct bearing on the understanding of the ways that mutual veto should operate in practice. Essentially, it may be understood from Lijphart's definition of mutual veto that under such a framework, the interests of all communities, irrespective of their size, will be protected. Whereas this definition

⁸ As the Lebanese case demonstrates.

seems satisfactory in theory, it might be that a specific mention of the ways that the mutual veto is designed to operate will help scholars understand the theory more clearly when consociationalism comes into effect, that is, in operation.

In sum, concerning all four components of the consociational theory of democracy, it can be said that an elaboration on their definitions may help researchers use the model more adequately to describe the political systems of particular states. As it stands, the imprecise definition of the four components puts in question the internal consistency of the model, its operability and thus, its utility, as shall also be seen in the next section. Indeed, it should be said that the four components do not operate in a vacuum, but rather, they are complementary and interdependent. Therefore, the vagueness of each concept alone has a direct bearing on the operability of the model as a whole, thus limiting its utility.

3. Case studies: The Netherlands and Switzerland

Sometimes, critics have gone to length to cast doubt on the utility of consociational theory for a number of societies which Lijphart designated as consociations, but which did not always exhibit the four consociational components of the theory. For instance, Halpern, basing her arguments on a study of the political systems of the Netherlands and Switzerland, argues that the four components of consociationalism are not present in a number of countries that Lijphart considered to be consociational democracies. Fundamentally, Halpern argues that 'there are cases which have been designated as consociational democracies that do not meet the primary requirements of consociational theory: that they be plural, that is, non-intersecting societies' (Halpern 1986, 187). As with Halpern, Carlson-Thies in his doctoral research on Dutch politics, argues against Lijphart's contention that the Netherlands is one of the founding cases of consociational democracy. He holds that the Netherlands is a pluriform, and not a consociational state system. By pluriform, Carlson-Thies means a 'democracy in which subculturally-rooted differences are affirmatively accommodated by the state' (Carlson-Thies 1993, v).

Here, two important points require mention. First, Lijphart equates multiethnic societies and divided societies. As Steiner points out, Lijphart equates cultural diversity and subcultural segmentation. Second, he refutes the possibility that multiethnic societies can develop stable political systems without recourse to consociational practices. As shall be argued in the relevant section below,⁹ this is partly because of the imprecise definition of key concepts of the theory.

⁹ See section B.4. in this chapter.

As with Carlson-Thies, Halpern, taking the case of Switzerland and the Netherlands, argues against Lijphart's assumption of the presence of subcultural hostility: 'The apparent absence of subcultural conflict of sufficient force to require a consociational solution in certain states that have been called consociational democracies suggests that the model has been applied to states that are not riven by subcultural conflicts that in turn produce instability (...) This conclusion throws into doubt both the ability of élite accommodation to explain stability in divided states and the necessity of recourse to the politics of accommodation in the first place' (Halpern 1986, 186). Arguing in similar vein to Carlson-Thies and Halpern, Barry criticises Lijphart's extensive work on the Netherlands, and maintains that elite behaviour in a consociational democracy was not necessarily responsible for stability of the country. Also using the Netherlands as an example, Barry demonstrates that elite behaviour could not account for the stability or peace in the country. He believes that Lijphart excluded the possibility or existence of a stable and fragmented society where consociational democracy or government by elite cartel did not exist in the first place (Lustick 1997, 100).

Van Schendelen also criticises Lijphart's classification of the Netherlands as a consociational democracy. Lijphart claims that only consociationalism saved the country, citing elite behaviour as central to the consociational model. Lijphart believes that Dutch politicians engaged widely in cooperative behaviour. However, Van Schendelen accounts for the structure of the electoral system 'as creating incentive enough to explain cooperative behavior and the formation of large coalitions' (Lustick 1997, 103). In other words, though Van Schendelen notes that politicians are inclined towards cooperation, he nonetheless points out that the Netherlands was peaceful 'before the consociational model was said to have gone into effect' (Lustick 1997, 104). The above discussion points to the problem generated by the imprecise definitions of the four components of the theory of consociational democracy. The vagueness surrounding the principles of the theory is responsible to a considerable extent for the ensuing confusion. It becomes increasingly difficult to classify the political systems of given countries.

B. Key concepts of consociational theory- definitions

This section will deal with the imprecise definition of the key concepts of the theory. Whereas most critics questioned and criticised what Lijphart meant by democracy, consociationalism, fragmented culture, plural society and stable democracy, Barry focused on the imprecise definition of the combined term, consociational democracy, without recourse to any alternative definition. This is not to say that other scholars did not provide other definitions of the combined term. However, these definitions did not differ in any respect from the definitions that Lijphart adopted. Here, it is important to note that only Hanf offered a different definition of the combined term, one that

departs significantly from Lijphart's definition. This section will deal with the definitions of the key concepts of consociational democracy that Lijphart conceived, the criticisms that were furnished against those definitions and the conclusion that may be drawn concerning the utility of the theory.

1. The combined term (Consociational democracy)

Lijphart defined consociational democracy as 'meaning government by elite cartel designed to turn a democracy with a fragmented culture into a stable democracy'. Over time, he used different words to refer to the same definition. Two definitions that Lijphart came up with, along with other similar ones, can be cited. The 1969 definition holds that 'the essential characteristic of consociational democracy as not so much any particular institutional arrangement as the deliberate joint effort by the elites to stabilize the system' (Lijphart 1969, 213). In the 1977 book, consociational democracy is defined in terms of the four components, but 'elite cooperation is the primary distinguishing feature of consociational democracy' (Lijphart 1977, 1). Then, a consociational democracy is a 'political community where elites make deliberate efforts to counterattack the immobilising and unstabilizing effects of cultural fragmentation' (Lijphart quoted in Banks, 1987, 26). Similarly, 'consociational democracy does not mean one specific set of rules and institutions. Instead, it means a general type of democracy defined in terms of four broad principles, all of which can be applied in a variety of ways' (Lijphart 1995b, 279). Clearly, Lijphart's recent definitions have added vagueness to the term (consociational democracy) and its meanings, as well as to the consociational model.

Commenting on these definitions, Van Schendelen is in agreement with Barry and criticises Lijphart's typology as packed with 'too much unacknowledged theory' (Lustick 1997, 104). Indeed, this new definition of Lijphart ignores the four components of consociational democracy upon which consociational theory is built, as well as the other background conditions or factors said to be conducive to consociationalism, thereby resulting in more ambiguity and vagueness. It is also important to mention that Lijphart used power sharing and consociational interchangeably, which resulted in confusion for the researchers who studied the model. However, he addressed this issue by writing that 'the term consociational worked well enough in scholarly writing but I found it to be an obstacle in communicating with policy-makers who found it to be too esoteric and polysyllabic; using power-sharing instead has greatly facilitated the process of communication beyond the confines of academic political science...The two are now defined in terms of the same four criteria and are clearly synonymous' (Lijphart 2000a, 428).

Different scholars offered definitions of consociational democracy similar to the one provided by Lijphart without altering the basic meaning of the combined term. O'Leary's definition however, carried a reductionist dimension to the theory. In very simplistic terms, he defines consociation as 'an association of communities' (O'Leary 1998). Banks provides a definition of consociational democracy similar to that of Lijphart's, although using his own terms. He writes that a consociation means 'deliberate cooperative actions taken by the rival elites to stabilize a highly polarised community' (Banks 1987, viii). Drawing on the societal context of his case study, Atlanta, Banks thinks a consociation 'results from biracial elite cooperation that is fostered by the elites' commitment to system stability and a supportive political culture' (Banks 1987, 6). Though both definitions are very similar, it is worth mentioning here that Banks replaced the term "fragmented" with "highly polarised" and introduced the notion of a "supportive political culture". However, this does not introduce any significant change to Lijphart's original definition.

For his part, Falaiye uses the definitions of consociationalism that Apter provided. He writes that 'by and large, consociationalism refers to the structures of societies in which deep primordial cleavages have been converted into instruments of effective pluralistic democracies'. Again, borrowing from Apter, Falaiye writes: 'As a social phenomenon, consociationalism implies the associating of groups in a way that maintains the distinctive characteristics of each of the constituents without inhibiting the pursuit of collective aims' (Falaiye 1990, 66). Last but not least, Chryssochoou offers a similar definition to that of Lijphart. According to the author, 'Consociational partnership is a system of cooperative subcultures based on the premise of joint government by what Dahrendorf called a cartel of elites, in the form of states, designed to accommodate a plethora of divergent interests and demands in order to achieve a goal of unity' (Chryssochoou 1994).

As mentioned earlier, researchers focused more on the critique of the terms 'consociational' and 'democracy' without giving great attention to the combined term. However, Barry sought to criticise the combined term without for all that offering an alternative definition. Barry considers that the word consociation is:

A more or less obsolete word meaning much the same as association and sharing with it the characteristic that it can be used both as an abstract noun and a concrete one. I do not suggest that words should not be redefined for scholarly purposes but it is very easy to run into formidable conceptual difficulties by doing so and we need to be aware of this. The problem is particularly great where, as here, an expression, consociational democracy, encapsulates a theory (Barry 1975a, 478).

Barry argues that 'Lijphart's definition of consociational democracy is too overloaded to do any substantial explanatory work' (Lustick 1997, 101). Though he did not offer an alternative definition,

it can be said that his criticism is justified, since the definition provided by Lijphart is open to a wide array of interpretations, thereby involving ambiguity and vagueness in two respects.

First, as Halpern argues, 'in almost every instance, cases can be simultaneously argued in and out of the consociational mode' (Halpern 1986, 189). Second, also according to Halpern, it becomes increasingly difficult to use the model to describe the political system of a particular state and to use it to dispute the nomination of particular cases as consociational democracies. However, while Barry does not offer a radically alternative definition of the combined term, it should be pointed out that such is no easy task. Hanf's alternative definition illustrates the difficulties involved. Hanf, while commenting on the ongoing Lebanese experiment with consociational democracy, from 1990 onwards, provides a different definition of the term to that of Lijphart. He defines consociational democracy as when syncretistic nationalism:

seeks to institutionalize the existing communities and organize their coexistence. Communal identity is politically articulated, though channelled within a federation of communities that constitute a transcending, multifarious nation; this is known as (...) the neologism "consociation" (Hanf 1993, 29).

As is clear, this definition differs significantly from Lijphart's definition. Here, it should be mentioned that it is the context within which Hanf is writing that prompts his choice of words. In the book *Coexistence in wartime Lebanon: decline of a state and rise of a nation*, where the definition develops, Hanf, who argues that consociationalism is the most viable political system for Lebanon, devises a definition suggesting the ability of consociationalism to bring about an element of nationhood and cohesiveness for a plural society. In other words, it may be said that Hanf is writing in the context of "what ought to be" rather than "what is". Consequently, Hanf's definition, adds more "democratic assumptions", and therefore "challenges" to the theory, which alter Lijphart's definition. This definition suggests an increased capability of the theory to act as a successful conflict-regulation mechanism and consequently, aims at increasing the utility of the model. Here, special attention should be given to the terms that Hanf uses, namely 'nationalism' and 'transcending multifarious nation'. This choice of words is by no means coincidental or impressionistic. Rather, it is a clear departure from Lijphart's definition and can be considered as an attempt to overcome the weaknesses of the theory, in the light of its inability in bringing about stable democracy.

In theory, this definition seems better suited to reducing intercommunal hostility, increasing prospects for nation-building, and therefore, strengthening the ability of consociational practices to generate a stable democracy. However, it is not entirely clear that this definition is operational in practice. As is seen in the previous and forthcoming sections, the constraints that the theory faces

once it enters into effect are substantial. Hanf's definition encompasses a greater realm of attributes, puts more responsibility and therefore challenges on the ability of consociationalism to generate stable democracy. These additional challenges come at a time when consociationalism in operation has implied that the original constraints are already difficult to overcome. Against this background, Hanf's theoretical definition adds a new dimension to the theory, with the new choice of words he introduces, and he undoubtedly attempts to strengthen and buttress the assumption that consociationalism generates democratic practices and stability. However, it is not entirely clear how operational it is. So far, this definition is not substantiated by evidence.

2. Democracy and consociationalism

Whereas the above section has discussed the critiques of the combined term, this section will present the critiques that were offered against the imprecision of both concepts (consociational and democracy). As with other scholars who studied the model of consociational democracy, Van Schendelen, in his critique of Lijphart's work, focuses on the imprecision and vagueness of Lijphart's terms, concepts, and definitions as well as on the various conditions said to be conducive to consociationalism. 'According to Van Schendelen, the theory can be criticised from three perspectives: the lack of conceptual clarity or the imprecision and mutability of key concepts, the difficulty of operating or measuring crucial elements of the theory and the absence of scientific attributes or qualities' (Falaiye 1990, 95). Van Schendelen believes that this vagueness is responsible for a selective use of evidence, invalid case studies, the prevention of finding favourable factors, variables and indicators and the absence of empirical testing and evidence.

Van Schendelen, however, is mostly concerned with the definition of democracy that Lijphart adopts. Lijphart holds that consociationalism is less than an ideal democracy but still a democracy nonetheless. Initially, in 1968, Lijphart defined democracy as 'simply a system of government in which the people have the opportunity to select their own leaders' (Lijphart 1968a, 71). Later in 1977, in the words of Lijphart, democracy 'virtually defies definition (...) It will be used here as a synonym of what Dahl calls "polyarchy" ' (Lijphart 1977, 4). In this respect, Van Schendelen's strong argument holds that 'the concept of polyarchy, if strictly taken, is incompatible with the consociational model and that, indeed, Lijphart does not factually apply this concept. In a polyarchy competition between the elites is, more than anything else, essential; in a consociation basically the opposite, namely intense collaboration, is crucial' (Van Schendelen 1984, 32). Furthermore, Van Schendelen criticises this typology saying that in that case, consociationalism should not be cast as a typological category of democracy, but as a variable. According to the author, a country in that

case may be consociational, but not necessarily democratic (Lustick 1997, 105). Indeed, it can be said that Van Schendelen's critique of Lijphart's definition is compelling.

3. Stable democracy

Initially, Lijphart defines a stable democracy as 'one in which the capabilities of the system are sufficient to meet the demands placed upon it' with democracy meaning 'simply a system of government in which the people have the opportunity to select their own leaders' (Lijphart 1968a, 71). In a later work, Lijphart's definition of stability 'is no longer the system's capability to meet the demands placed upon it, but now the system should also do this in a satisfactory way and it should be able to maintain itself' (Van Schendelen 1984, 23). In his 1977 book, Lijphart, recognising the elusiveness of the concept of stable democracy, draws on the works of Eckstein and Hurewitz, arguing that political stability is a 'difficult and ambiguous term [and] stability will be used as a multidimensional concept combining ideas that are frequently encountered in the comparative politics literature: system maintenance, civil order, legitimacy and effectiveness. These four dimensions characterise stable democracy'. Thus, his definition of democratic stability comprises (Lijphart 1977, 4):

- * A high probability of remaining democratic.
- * A low level of actual and potential violence.
- * The degree of legitimacy that the regime enjoys.
- * The decisional effectiveness of the regime.

Despite the centrality of this concept in the consociational literature, Lustick equated stability with political stability, thus ignoring the additional dimension of democratic stability that the consociational model refers to. He wrote that '“stability” or “political stability” will refer to the continued operation of specific patterns of political behaviour, apart from the illegal use of violence, accompanied by a general expectation among the attentive public that such patterns are likely to remain intact in the foreseeable future' (Lustick 1979, 325).

In this respect, Van Schendelen advances the notion of the elusiveness of this concept, and argues that though Hurewitz and Eckstein tried to define political stability, they have also warned against it in the same essay that Lijphart refers to, but in a different paragraph. Indeed while Hurewitz notes that 'the concept of political stability remains as elusive as other abstract concepts' and Eckstein warns that the four concepts that they have both provided were tentative and provisional ideas, 'Lijphart takes both conceptualizations for granted' (Hurewitz & Eckstein quoted in Van Schendelen 1984, 33). As Van Schendelen's observations suggest, it is clear that the definition of political and

stable democracy is vague, and leaves room for various interpretations, only adding vagueness to the model.

Similarly, Halpern echoes such concerns, making the point that the definition 'is probabilistic (...) unknowable (...) relative, speculative, or impressionistic'¹⁰ and impractical because 'it is couched in comparative terms and provides no context within which these comparisons can be made' (Halpern 1984, 114): 'That stability is not defined in the theory contributes to the difficulty of determining if consociational democracy is extant, if it has been attained, and when movement from one type of regime to another is occurring' (Halpern 1984, 118). According to Halpern, the concept of stable democracy 'is presented in such broad terms as to be rendered useless' (Halpern 1984, 356). Indeed, in the light of the centrality of the concept in the theory and its importance for the internal consistency of the model, Lijphart's definition appears problematic because of its reliance on immeasurable concepts.

4. Plural societies

The concept of a plural society is crucial for an understanding of consociational theory, since it is the context within which consociationalism is designed to operate. Lijphart's initial definition of a plural society is as follows: 'political parties, interests groups, media of communication, schools, and voluntary associations tend to be organised along the lines of segmental cleavages [whether] of religious, ideological, linguistic, regional, cultural, racial, or ethnic nature (...) The groups of the population bounded by such cleavages will be referred to as the segments of a plural society' forming 'clearly separate and easily identifiable segments' (Lijphart in Steiner 1981b, 340).

In this respect, Steiner's criticism of this definition is the most notable. Steiner argues that it is difficult to distinguish between a plural and a non-plural society if relying on Lijphart's definition since Lijphart does not state in his analysis of plural societies when these societies stop being plural. In other words, he 'does not consider the time-period and does not define a time frame as a measure for assessing consociational democracy in these societies and for comparing these plural societies' (Steiner 1981b, 339-40). Most importantly however, Steiner argues that Lijphart confuses cultural diversity and subcultural segmentation. According to Steiner, 'the existence in a society of various languages or religions, for example, indicates only cultural diversity but not necessarily subcultural fragmentation (...) Lijphart is obviously interested in subcultural segmentation but not in cultural diversity' (Steiner 1981b, 341). Indeed, Steiner's observation that Lijphart equates plural and

¹⁰ Halpern borrows the term from Steiner who called Lijphart's method 'the impressionistic method' while at the same time acknowledging that Lijphart's 'broad knowledge of the literature is to be admired' (Steiner 1981b, 346).

divided has a considerable impact on consociational theory itself. Steiner points to the example where a country may have different spoken languages without the language index being a criterion responsible for the fragmentation of the country. The language index does not show how it divides the country. At the same time, this index might be responsible for dividing the country along ethnic, but not political cleavages.

In short, Steiner argues that all of Lijphart's criteria and indicators are not sufficient in the first place, but are sometimes not interrelated, and not conducive to conclusions about whether a society is plural or not. He remarks that 'it is unclear in the literature whether segmentation along social class lines is relevant for consociational theory. When Lijphart defines segmental cleavages, he does not mention social class as a possible basis (...) I wish to go *beyond* the consociational theory in the sense that I am definitely also interested in conflicts among social classes' (Steiner 1981a, 1247).

Indeed, Steiner's criticism is valuable in the light of the application of the model of consociational democracy to many developing countries where class divisions and societal injustices play a crucial role in shaping the nature/fabric of society and thus, influence the stability of the polity. Particularly noteworthy, in terms of the present discussion, is the mention of the detrimental impact such social injustices and economic disparities have on the segmentation of society (along horizontal lines) and the outbreak of conflict. Similarly, the interaction of ethnicity, religion, and culture with socio-economic disparities is a frequent manifestation in such developing societies, making them prone to instability. Finally, because of the strong element of elite rule in consociational democracy, it often occurs that elites manipulate ethnic, religious and cultural differences among the groups so as to mask socio-economic disparities, themselves a result of poor governmental (or elite) performance. This diffuses the potential for the emergence of a widely supported class-based opposition. In later works, Lijphart addressed the criticisms of his original definition of a plural society and attempted to remedy to its shortcomings. Thus, in the 1985 book, he writes:

I proposed that societal pluralism should be seen as a matter of degree (...) and I suggested four criteria to determine whether a society is completely plural or deviates greatly from perfect pluralism: 1. Can the segments into which the society is divided be clearly identified? 2. Can the size of each segment be exactly determined? 3. Do the segmental boundaries between the different political, social, and economic organizations coincide? 4. Do the segmental parties receive the stable electoral support of their respective segments? (Lijphart 1985, 87).

However, on the same page, he immediately recognises that these criteria:

define the concept of plural society more clearly but of course are not completely precise. The degrees of pluralism are still not exactly measurable, and a judgment of the extent to which a given society satisfies each of the criteria is necessarily "impressionistic"- but unfortunately no better method is available in the current stage of development of the social sciences (Lijphart 1985, 87).

Again, one of the major problems of working with the theory is the variation, over time, of the key words and concepts of the theory and the difficulty in deciding whether particular societies fit the description of the model. Basic concepts were given slightly different definitions in Lijphart's articles over a span of thirty years, from 1968 onwards. For instance, Lijphart sometimes used the term plural society and at other times, he used the word divided or deeply divided society. It was not until 1995 that he acknowledged this and pointed out that he would be using both terms as synonyms: 'I shall use the terms deeply divided society and plural society as synonyms' (Lijphart 1995, 276). Clearly, the above-mentioned critiques only re-affirm the difficulty that researchers face when attempting to classify different political systems as consociationalism. As noted above, this casts doubts on the utility of the theory.

5. Crosscutting cleavages

As with the concept of a plural society, the notion of crosscutting cleavages is crucial for an adequate understanding of the theory. Consociationalism is essentially a mechanism designed to work in societies characterised by a number of cleavages. In this respect, Farah argues that there is a lack of understanding and also discrimination when using the concept of crosscutting cleavages. In his words, 'the crosscutting cleavage proposition has been invoked frequently (...) in a variety of circumstances and with a lack of discrimination. Many times, it is used by two writers attempting to explain diametrically opposed phenomena' (Farah 1975, 6). Secondly, the author holds that there is a 'lack of a definitive definition of the term' (Farah 1975, 8). Thirdly, he points out that the concept suffers from theoretical/typological problems and should be 'refined by further typological elaboration' (Farah 1975, 10). Lastly, Farah points to an empirical problem. He identifies a lack of empirical testing, and argues that 'the researcher wishing to use cleavage as an analysis tool (...) faces the problem that few works have tested the crosscutting proposition empirically' (Farah 1975, 10). Against this background, the essential concepts treated by the theory of consociational democracy appear to be vague and misleading. This leads Halpern to argue that:

The model of consociational democracy lacks a serviceable set of defining characteristics. This has resulted in the model's impracticable compass and its inability to resolve disputes of categorical composition (Halpern 1986, 188).

In the light of the wide scholarly consensus over the difficulty faced in defining the key concepts of the theory of consociational democracy and their resulting vagueness, it is becoming increasingly apparent that caution should be applied in any attempt to attribute consociational characteristics and practices to any given country thought to fit the model. In this respect, Steiner argues that Lijphart uses the impressionistic method to satisfy the validity of consociational theory, 'to determine

whether a country is predominantly competitive or consociational' and that in consequence, 'it is no longer fruitful to continue the discussion at this level'. Consequently, he suggests that 'the time has come for a fundamental change in research strategy, a change which would allow us to go *beyond* consociational theory toward a more general theory of political decision making' (Steiner 1981a, 1242). He argues that this would alleviate some of the weaknesses of the theory in its present form.

As shall be argued in the following section, not only do the key principles and concepts of consociational democracy suffer from imprecision and vagueness, the background conditions which are thought to sustain consociational politics have also been subject to increasing criticism in this respect, pointing to their inability, alone, to preserve consociationalism. The discussion will involve a case study of Malaysian politics whose examination suggests that the background sustaining conditions alone cannot, in fact, explain the presence and maintenance of consociationalism within the country.

C. Background conditions for consociational democracy

In addition to the four components of consociational theory, Lijphart identified a list of what he initially called 'favourable factors' or background conditions for the establishment and successful operation of consociational democracies. Lijphart's list of factors can essentially be seen as an attempt to clarify consociational theory and alleviate the weaknesses of the four components by specifying the conditions under which the model is supposed to operate. This section will seek to determine whether these conditions can actually be said to constitute favourable factors for sustaining consociationalism. More importantly however, the discussion will investigate the high expectations that these factors put on the nature of consociationalism's plural society. In 1968, Lijphart specified six background factors, and these were changed to eight in 1969, nine in 1977 and finally eight in 1985. These are:

- * The absence of a majority segment and segments of roughly the same size.
- * A relatively small number of segments (ideally between three and five).
- * A relatively small total population.
- * Foreign threats (that are perceived as a common danger).
- * The absence of large socio-economic inequalities.
- * Geographical concentration of the segments.
- * Pre-existing traditions of political accommodation.
- * Overarching loyalties (that counter-balance the centrifugal effects of segmental loyalties).

Numerous political researchers have examined the importance and significance of these factors or background conditions for the establishment and sustainability of consociational democracies. The most important critiques came from Bogaards, Halpern, Steiner, Dew, Hoppe, Pappalardo, Hudson,

Schneckener, Van Schendelen, Lehmbruch and O'Leary. The different criticisms that they offered will constitute the major discussion of this section before further criticism is raised. There is no consensus among critics concerning the ability of the favourable factors to sustain consensual accommodationist, or consociational, politics. Some have viewed them as being able to sustain consociational politics, while others have considered them as mere helpful factors and a third group refuted their ability to act as sustaining conditions of consociationalism. Each perspective will be examined alone.

1. Explanatory power of the background factors

Dew and Hoppe argue in a positive fashion. They treat Lijphart's factors as favourable conditions and account for their capability to sustain consociational politics. Contrary to Lijphart himself, they hold that these factors or background conditions form 'a cumulative index of stability' of consociational democracies' (Bogaards 1998, 488). For example, Dew uses the presence of some favourable factors to explain the success of the consociational regime in Surinam. However, Hoppe later uses the absence of other favourable factors to explain its failure. Hence, it may be argued that this selective use of evidence over a span of years points to two problematic issues. First, this selectivity points to the lack of evidence in the eight factors that can account for the smooth running of consociational politics. Second, it questions whether the factors can be classified as 'favourable'.

Lijphart himself, Bogaards and Steiner belong to the second group, and thereby adopt a cautious approach concerning the ability of the factors to act as favourable conditions. Although the designer of the factors, Lijphart is quick to note that these factors are helpful conditions. He states that they should not be regarded as either necessary or sufficient. In his words, the presence of all or most of them does not lead to consociationalism, nor does their absence prevent it: unfavourable factors do not make consociational democracy impossible or less plausible, and favourable factors do not make it possible or more plausible. Lijphart warns that his list of factors is meant to be 'illustrative rather than exhaustive'. As he himself points out, 'neither separately nor jointly do these conditions ensure the presence or success of consociationalism' (Bogaards 1998, 477).

Lijphart's approach is justified to a large extent when he notes that it is always up to the policy-makers to make the most out of these factors and to engineer them to allow consociation to result from their efforts. While this is true to a considerable degree, since consociational theory is an extremely elitist form of democracy, this idea is not firmly substantiated by evidence and will be

discussed in the next section dealing with elite role.¹¹ However, Lijphart's stance on favourable factors is echoed by many other scholars, including Bogaards. Bogaards makes the case that the favourable factors or conditions 'are not derived deductively from consociational theory but inductively from the experience in consociational democracies' (Bogaards 1998, 476). He therefore concludes that while acknowledging the significance of these factors for consociationalism, their importance is relegated to that of a mere factor. Similarly, Steiner supports Bogaards' position, thereby arguing that the reasons for the significance of these factors 'are not sufficiently interrelated, because they are not deducted from a common set of assumptions' (Steiner 1981b, 351).

The last approach that will be discussed in this paragraph adopts not only a cautious but also critical perspective. Hudson criticises the relevance and significance of the background conditions. However, contrary to all the above-mentioned arguments, Hudson links his criticism directly to the model itself. He establishes a direct relationship between these factors and consociational theory, arguing that Lijphart's addition of a number of favourable conditions to the four components of consociational democracy is by itself a weakness: 'They no doubt add verisimilitude but the more there are, the less powerful and applicable the theory becomes' (Hudson 1988, 232). As with Hudson, Van Schendelen presents a compelling critique of the significance of the factors, arguing that these factors bear important consequences on the relevance and significance of consociational theory. He holds that these 'so-called favorable conditions' are 'empty' because they cannot be 'tested in a practical way' and that Lijphart 'seems to be more concerned about the application of his theory than about its validity' (Van Schendelen 1984, 30, 34). Van Schendelen concludes that Lijphart thought consociationalism should be applied to any society or country facing political instability stemming from inter-group conflict, irrespective of other variables in consideration (Lustick 1997, 107-8).

Similarly, Pappalardo too claims that 'it is unwarranted to speak of conditions when factors are neither necessary nor sufficient' (Bogaards 1998, 487) and since 'the [identified] conditions (...) often fail to satisfy one or more criteria that test their reliability' (Pappalardo 1981, 365). In a critical article about the logical and empirical power of the background conditions, Pappalardo's investigation reveals that only two conditions (stability among subcultures and elite predominance over a deferential and organisationally encapsulated following) are important, as they 'have withstood a difficult test' while this does not mean that 'the others do not count at all' (Pappalardo 1981, 387). Similarly, Schneckener adopts the same approach in his analysis of the favourable

¹¹ See section D. in this chapter.

factors that make power-sharing work. He concludes that 'all actor-oriented factors seem more important than structural conditions' (Schneckener 2000, 17). While this reveals the determining impact of the strong element of elite rule and mass passivity as conditions for the operability of the model, this is not always substantiated by evidence, as the case study of the Nigerian experiment with consociationalism will reveal.

Finally, Eckstein, in a challenging position, contrary to the above-mentioned scholarly efforts, contends that it is 'those calamitously improbable combinations of circumstances which actually make democracy work' (Khazen 1987, 71-2). He does not account for the eight favourable factors in sustaining democracy. Hence, it is becoming increasingly clear from the above-mentioned critiques that these factors fail to explain more clearly the conditions under which consociationalism operates. Therefore, it is doubtful whether they can be considered favourable. Consequently, it is uncertain whether the conditions that Lijphart set forth can explain the presence of consociational practices. Best, the words of du Toit, 'these conditions have been widely criticized for failing to establish a causal relationship between elite behavior and consociational devices in plural societies' (du Toit 1987, 422).

As regards the implications contained within the formulation of these background factors, it may be said that they cast doubt on the ability of the consociational model to deliver on the promise of democratic stability. If consociationalism purports its ability to regulate conflict in divided/deeply divided/plural societies, then the implication is that such societies are likely to manifest a number of cleavages, discussed above, that threaten stability. Hence, Lijphart's advocacy of the absence of a majority segment, segments of roughly the same size, a relatively small number of segments (ideally between three and five), the absence of large socio-economic inequalities and the presence of overarching loyalties (that counter-balance the centrifugal effects of segmental loyalties), as helpful factors, indicates that such societies are no longer characterised according to him as plural ones. Rather, such characteristics that Lijphart states seem to approximate the attributes of a relatively stable society and polity. In other words, the implication in Lijphart's factors is that consociationalism seems suitable to better work in stable societal contexts. Hence, the applicability and utility of the consociational model for plural societies are seriously questioned, as are the consociationalism's internal assumptions and logic.

2. Quantification of the background conditions

In an effort to rely on precision and measurement, Lijphart recently attempted to quantify the background factors. In 1985, he conceived of a five-point scale for classifying factors, ranging from

-2 to +2 whereby -2 is considered very unfavourable and +2 very favourable. Having assessed and weighted all factors equally when measuring democracy in a given country, Lijphart warns against the scores he derives. First, he suggests that these factors are not always similarly assessed and rated by different scholars: the same factor might get different ratings by different experts. Second, Lijphart, when devising scores, assumed that each of the factors is of approximately the same importance. He therefore stresses that various experts could rightly allocate unequal weight to each factor. While Lijphart's attempt to quantify these factors was largely a response to a number of critiques and objections raised against the imprecision and inexactitude of the theory, this attempt did not yield or give way to a more precise understanding of the functioning of the factors and of the theory itself. Mainly, it can be said that the attempt at quantifying the factors did not provide exact ways to account for the presence/absence of consociational practices, and to explain the stability/breakdown of consociational democracies, two major issues with which this thesis is concerned. Briefly, the factors that Lijphart conceived do not seem able to ensure, alone, a favourable background or environment for the conduct of smooth consensual politics, as shall be seen in the case study of the Malaysian experiment with consociationalism.

3. Case study: the Malaysian Federation

Case, in his doctoral study of consociationalism in Malaysia, seeks to identify what practices account for the conduct of smooth consociational politics in the country (a federation divided along ethnic religious lines). Case finds that the factors that are believed to operate as favourable or helpful conditions fail to explain and account for the maintenance of consociational practices in Malaysia. Each factor will be examined separately. One of the factors that Lijphart initially came up with but later dropped is the expected positive relationship between small country size and consensual politics. This hypothesis was taken up by Steiner, who argues that 'the smaller political systems are, the greater their tendency to regulate conflicts on proportional principles' (Steiner 1971, 65). While commenting on the nature of this relationship, Case argues that 'nor does the small size of a national elite assure consensual elite unity and stable democracy. As is empirically clear, a small country may as easily produce a disunified elite dominated by an unchecked and ruthless national leader' (Case 1991, 66).¹² Consequently, small country size cannot be said to promote consensual elite behaviour. The second factor under examination is the geographical concentration of the segments, that is, segmental isolation, believed to reduce hostility and conflict between them. In this respect, Case observes that though Malays and Chinese are residentially separate, they 'were in sufficiently frequent contact in village market places to garner mutual

¹² The Lebanese case lends support to this argument: the collapse of accommodationist elite politics in Lebanon, a small country (10452 Square Kilometres).

disrespect' and 'would thereafter return to their respective rural and urban milieus to unkindly characterize one another' (Case 1991, 64).

The third factor under examination is the presence of overarching loyalties that counter-balance the centrifugal effects of segmental loyalties. Again, Case maintains that in Malaysia, 'social cleavages generally reinforce one another and intensify ethnic distinctions' (Case 1991, 61). Therefore, according to the author, there was no room for overarching loyalties that could reduce the divisive effects of segmental loyalties. As a conclusion, the author argues that crosscutting cleavages cannot explain the emergence of consociationalism in Malaysia. A fourth factor that Case puts under examination is the absence of large socio-economic inequalities between Chinese and Malays. In this respect, he observes that 'coinciding with these social differences are political and economic inequalities' (Case 1991, 61), therefore putting more strain on the stability of the system. In sum, Case finds that the above-mentioned factors cannot explain the adoption of consociational politics in Malaysia. He argues that it is the role of the elite that can effectively account for the maintenance of consociational practices in the Malaysian federation. According to him, the political elite has played a crucial role in maintaining a stable democratic regime. To account for the stability of the system, the author views elite behaviour, in terms of elite interaction and elite choices, as the central factor for the explanation of regime change and continuity. Here, it is important to note that Case argues there were no pre-existing traditions of political accommodation in the country, a last factor presumed to account for the conduct of consociational practices. The author argues as follows: 'British colonialism did not universally implant the elite traditions and accommodation necessary for stable democracy' (Case 1991, 76). However, he also argues that 'the most important condition for this consensual unity has been the tradition of elite accommodation, most commonly provided in developing countries by British rule (...) Colonial tutelage (...) was itself not enough: Native elites in decolonized states still had to choose to perpetuate the tradition of accommodation' (Case 1991, 79-80). In sum, the author asserts that although there were no stable entrenched traditions of political accommodation, British rule helped establish a pattern of consensual, elite behaviour:

British colonialism effectively predisposed native elites to unify consensually within and across ethnic segments. Although these elites have not as yet constructed a genuinely "consociational democracy", they have nonetheless been disposed to cooperate in important ways and to share power in accordance with a set of formal and informal rules of the game (Case 1991, 54).

After contrasting the model of consociational democracy to the Malaysian political, social, ethnic, religious, economic and cultural system, Case argues that the most important factor accounting for the relative stability of Malaysia was elite behaviour. The author concludes: 'Hence, the maintenance of elite accommodation and a stable democratic regime after independence has

depended on a favorable confluence of elite choices and capacities, assisted by simple good fortune' (Case 1991, 79-80). Here, an argument may be advanced against the contention that consociationalism would emerge from 'simple good fortune', as Case holds. Moreover, the author's argument runs counter to the wide scholarly consensus that the British colonising empire actually followed a divide and rule policy, contrary to what Case has suggested. Indeed, Case affirms that British rule most commonly provided a tradition of elite accommodation to developing countries. This was not the case in the Near East and in the Middle East.

4. Genetic versus sustaining factors

A rather similar attempt to that of Lijphart's background conditions can be found in the works of Rustow and Lehmbruch. Their attempt to distinguish between genetic and sustaining factors can be considered as an endeavour to curtail the vagueness the theory of consociational theory and improve its explanatory power. The idea finds its origins in the recent literature on democratisation, which points out that 'the process of democratic transition is different from that of democratic consolidation with different requirements for success' (Bogaards 1998, 484). Against this background, Rustow holds that 'the factors that keep a democracy stable may not be the ones that brought it into existence: explanations of democracy must distinguish between function and genesis' (Rustow 1970, 346). Having differentiated between both, Lehmbruch argues that when it comes to consociational democracy, 'the distinction between establishment and maintenance has received little attention' (Bogaards 1998, 484). Therefore, Lehmbruch advocates distinguishing between 'genetic conditions conducive to the take-off of consociational democracy and sustaining conditions conducive to its maintenance' (Bogaards 1998, 484). According to Lehmbruch, the most important internal conditions that contribute to the probability of a consociational take-off are:

- * Some basic national symbols are accepted by all elite groups in the system.
- * Past violence among the subcultures is perceived as a traumatic experience; therefore conflict management by violence is regarded as non-profitable to all the groups.
- * Due to the existence of strong "conciliar" traditions, cooperative strategies are already strongly internalized by the elites as norms of conflict resolution.
- * Among top elites there exist intense informal communications across subcultures which may be closed to interference from non-elites. The probability of this is greater in smaller countries.
- * No compact majority group exists which is able to govern by a zero-sum strategy.

Both Lijphart and Bogaards refute Lehmbruch's contribution. For instance, Bogaards argues contrary to this distinction, claiming that the genetic factors are most of the time sustaining factors, and that sustaining factors are also genetic ones. Hence, according to Bogaards, the distinction between both loses much of its meaning. Similarly, Lijphart argues, alongside Bogaards, as follows: 'Generally a factor that is favourable for the *establishment* of a consociation will also be a positive

condition for its *maintenance*' (Bogaards 1998, 484). To sum up, the first standpoint maintains that a distinction between both factors is possible, whereas the second perspective argues against the possibility of such a distinction. Here it is argued that the idea of favourable factors in itself is highly debatable. The discussion above has pointed out that it is problematic, and sometimes misleading, to consider these factors as either favourable factors or helpful conditions. Rather, it was concluded that they cannot explain either the creation or the maintenance of consociational democracy. Therefore, it is questionable whether a distinction should be drawn between genetic and sustaining factors when it is not entirely clear that the factors are favourable in the first place. Hence, whether there should be a distinction between both brings an element of senselessness into the discussion. However, efforts at clarifying the vagueness of the theory of consociational democracy were not limited to the two endeavours discussed above. They involved two more attempts, to which the discussion now turns.

5. Consociational engineering and coercive consociationalism

In the light of the strong element of elite rule in consociationalism, numerous scholars sought to understand and determine ways by which the elite would intervene for the purpose of creating and maintaining consociational politics. For instance, O'Leary developed the concept of 'consociational engineering' whereby the elite and policy-makers attempt to engineer and maintain factors said to generate consociational democracy when faced with unfavourable factors. He defines consociational engineering as 'leadership attempts at the purposeful creation and maintenance of a consociational democracy' (Bogaards 1998, 485). He argues that the relationship between the factors and elite behaviour could work in two ways, not one way only as it was believed. According to him, policy-makers could engineer such factors. However, O'Leary is quick to find that these factors are not malleable, but rather, have inflexible characteristics. Denoeux advances this point too, arguing that 'while the political engineering associated with consociationalism may not always be a solution to the inherent instability of plural societies, its chance of success will be heavily influenced by the quality of the political class' (Denoeux 1993, 107).

Hence, O'Leary introduces the concept of 'coercive consociationalism, whereby a common external threat forces consociational features in a multi-communal society' (Bogaards 1998, 485). In this respect, as argued above, elaborating on factors which fail to account for the conduct of smooth consociational politics and do not always ensure the maintenance of such a system, does not help to buttress the explanatory power of the theory. Moreover, in this respect, it is important to point to the risk involved in adopting O'Leary's approach. In divided societies, especially deeply divided ones, there is often disagreement as to what constitutes 'commonly perceived foreign threats'.

For different reasons, Lijphart argues against O'Leary's concept of 'coercive consociationalism'. He holds that 'consociationalism can never be imposed from the outside without an internal constituency' (Bogaards 1998, 486). This is not to say, however, that Lijphart does not overestimate the power of consociational engineering. On the contrary, his prescription of consociational engineering to policy makers in divided societies is noteworthy. In the words of Halpern, Lijphart's 'prescription is offered not only as an available policy option, but as the best- if not the sole- strategy for attaining stable democracy in divided states' (Halpern 1984, 38). Bogaards argues along the same lines, pointing out that 'even if all the favourable factors are indeed favourable, consociationalism will not come about unless the political elites desire it. Consociationalism is not a product of the environment, but an act of will of the political elites' (Bogaards 1998, 486).

It can be said that as with Lijphart's attempt to quantify conditions and Lehmbruch's attempt to distinguish between genetic and sustaining factors, O'Leary's two attempts point to the difficulty researchers face in attempting to determine what accounts for the maintenance of consociational politics in a deeply divided society. However, consociationalism having essentially stressed the role of the political elite as central to the success of consociational democracy, the next section will discuss the role of the elite in accommodating differences so that stable democracy results from its efforts.

D. Elite role in consociational democracy

So far, what was argued in the previous section points to the weak predictive value of Lijphart's factors in sustaining consociational practices: 'In this elite-centered approach, the favourable factors are conditional variables on elite decisions, not on consociational democracy itself' (Bogaards 1998, 488). This section will seek to determine whether the four elite tasks, as expressed by Lijphart, can explain elite decisions and behaviour under the consociational framework. Since the model under study is an elitist one, it is important to take into account the impact and weight of the representatives of different groups on the decision-making process and the implementation of such decisions. Du Toit's argument that 'consociational theory cannot explain what conditions elite cooperation and what determines power sharing and consensus' (du Toit 1986, 419) will be examined. It will be argued that while the elite plays a central role in the stability of the system, other factors that come in play may neutralise elite efforts at engineering consociational practices. Here, it will be suggested that these factors are not always variables dependent on elite consensual efforts. Rather, they operate independently. It will also be pointed out that Lijphart's four elite tasks are not clearly designed and do not specify what constitutes coalescent elite behaviour, as opposed

to non-consensual elite behaviour. With regard to the strong element of elite rule in consociational democracies, Seaver writes:

Social scientists have argued that elite willingness to compromise is a better explanation for stable democracy in plural societies than are consociational devices and that the determinants of elite cooperation are consequently more important in explaining stability than specific political mechanisms. Thus, elite willingness to cooperate may be the only necessary condition. If this is the case, scholars should focus on identifying the sources of elite cooperation rather than on the effects of certain political mechanisms that may not even be necessary for stable democracy or on a myriad conditions that do not even achieve the status of necessary conditions (Seaver 2000, 254).

In other words, since consociational theory is essentially an elitist form of democracy, it is expected that greater attention should be attributed to a precise elaboration of elite tasks. A practical illustration of these problems will be provided through a case study of Nigerian elite relations, the examination of which introduces a new dimension to the theory. Contrary to the general assumption that the accommodationist role of the elite is a sufficient condition for sustaining smooth consociational politics, the case study seems to suggest (though not adequately) that the latter also requires a favourable economic situation.

1. Elite tasks

In the light of the heavy reliance of the model and its operability on the role of the elites, Lijphart's vague conception of how consociationalism operates in practice lends considerable support to the argument that the model's elite tasks are not adequately defined. Moreover, in the light of the centrality of the concept of the elites, Lijphart does not elaborate on the definition of the term (i.e., who are the elites, who do they represent, in what capacity are they representing people and what are their individual motivations, as opposed to their duties as representatives of the mass?)

Though he heavily stressed the role of the political elite in engineering consociational democracy, and in light of the reliance of the theory on accommodationist elite behaviour so as to maintain a smooth political environment conducive to stable democracy, Lijphart only conceived four elite tasks. For him, consensual elite behaviour guarantees the success of consociational democracies. He adopts a voluntaristic stance: 'Politicians can change the course of a country if they so desire'. He argued that decision-makers' behaviour is central to the success of consociational democracies. Moreover, according to him, the elite is able to understand the dangers of a heterogeneous society, a contention not always satisfied, as shall be seen in the Lebanese case. Therefore, for Lijphart, the elite is able, if it wishes, to stabilise democracy by building institutions, fostering policies and constraining forms of democratic conditions. Lijphart launched his programme on 'how elite choice and consociationally structured political institutions could produce stable democracy'. Lijphart held

that multi-communal states were doomed to be unstable if it was not for the role of the elite. 'There is a variable that can account for their stability: the behaviour of the political elite'. Despite tension, instability and competition among them, the elite leaders can produce stability by making 'deliberate efforts to counteract the immobilising and unstabilizing effects of cultural fragmentation'. At first, Lijphart used the term 'elite cartel' rather than the term 'grand coalition', varyingly characterising the behaviour of the elites over the years as 'spirit of accommodation, a grand coalition, specific rules of the game, and prudence' (Van Schendelen 1984, 37) and thus adding to the confusion for researchers studying the model. It was only afterwards that the term 'grand coalition' started appearing in articles as a substitute for 'elite cartel'. However, it should be mentioned that both terms are used interchangeably. Concerning elite tasks, Lijphart identifies four requirements that the elite cartel has to meet (Lijphart 1969, 216):

- * The ability to accommodate the divergent interests and demands of the subcultures.
- * The ability to transcend cleavages and to join in a common effort with the elites of rival subcultures.
- * A commitment to the maintenance of the system and to the improvement of its cohesion and stability.
- * An understanding of the perils of political fragmentation.

Though Lijphart's concept of what came to be called in the consociational literature "prudent/alert/flexible leadership" as a condition for stable democracy was not as contested as his concept of the 'helpful' factors, his insistence on the consensual role of the elite as a guarantee for system stability in divided societies indicated the need for an approach that had strong explanatory power for elite behaviour. Critics did not consider the elite tasks that Lijphart put forward as having enough predictive power, for two reasons.

The first weakness relates to the lack of a precise definition of elite behaviour and tasks. In this respect, Halpern, commenting on the four requirements that Lijphart has specified concerning the role of the elite, considers elite behaviour as ill-defined: 'There are no rules for the classification of mixed patterns of behaviour (...) The model provides no criteria for distinguishing between the two modes of behaviour [adversarial and coalescent]' (Halpern 1986, 193). A closer look at Lijphart's four elite tasks substantiates Halpern's critique. First, the tasks set by Lijphart seem vague, and framed in general terms. Second, since they do not enclose clearly stated suggestions as to what he considers consensual or non-consensual, they can be understood and interpreted differently by different readers. Therefore, not only do they not offer definitions of non-consensual or coalescent politics, they leave freedom to the reader in interpreting subjectively what he refers to as 'ability', 'commitment' and 'understanding'. This broadness is problematic because consociational democracy involves a strong element of elite rule, relying centrally on consensual elite behaviour for the attaining and maintaining of stability/stable democracy. Accordingly, failing to discern

between modes of elite behaviour makes it difficult for researchers to use the model to characterise the political system of divided societies/polities, especially where the central role of the elite is linked to pre-existing traditions of political accommodation (themselves difficult to discern).

The second weakness is identified by Bogaards who, in a compelling critique, goes one step further than Halpern. Though Bogaards fundamentally agrees with Lijphart, he indicates the necessity of stressing leadership autonomy and theories about what motivates leaders in their choices, rather than voluntarism, as Lijphart does. He argues that if elite behaviour is important in plural societies, there is a need to develop an elite centered approach to explain and predict the choices made by the political elite (Bogaards 1998, 490-2). He writes: 'Lijphart does not specify what he means by "ability", but most likely is referring to both willingness and opportunity. It is clear that the four requirements or prerequisites (...) have little prediction or explanatory force' (Bogaards 1998, 489). While Bogaards' critique is understandable, this increasing reliance on the central role of the elite might undermine important democratic practices that also necessary for the maintenance of a system of stable democracy. Bogaards' contentions do not seem to ensure that all democratic practices are given attention. More central to this discussion is the following observation: Lijphart's elite tasks do not identify a precise pattern of elite behaviour, whether consensual or non-consensual, nor do they determine what regulates elite behaviour.

For instance, Pappalardo warns that 'such optimism has its costs, especially if one relies on the voluntaristic, rational and intentional aspects of human behavior when inquiring into the future of a political system, which in fact risks giving merely presumptive answers' clarifying that 'to over-emphasize the ability of the élites makes the formulation of logically binding deductions impossible. If so, such an over-emphasis risks making the theoretical content and practical utility of the consociational model empty from a predictive point of view (...) Hence, voluntarism and optimism dominate...' (Pappalardo 1981, 366). For the author, Lijphart's insistence on the good will of the élites and his claim that 'consociationalism can be brought into being simply by the free choice of the élites (...) contains a good deal of wishful thinking' (Pappalardo 1981, 387). Similar concerns were raised by various scholars such as the following criticism: 'the omnipotent, positive role it [consociational theory] attributes to elites may be exaggerated and too simplistic' (Obler, Steiner & Dierickx 1977, 40).

Du Toit notes that 'what the [consociational] theory cannot explain is under what conditions grand coalition (and other consociational devices) do in fact produce power sharing and consensus decisions. Furthermore, it fails to describe and predict the power relations and decision modes within such coalitions' (du Toit 1987, 419). Interestingly, du Toit notices that 'bargaining about

bargaining is *the first and most important stage*¹³ in the process of consociational conflict settlement. Only after all parties to a conflict have agreed to bargaining as a means of conflict settlement can it be expected that consociational devices such as grand coalitions will produce power sharing and consensual governing' (du Toit 1987, 423). He also stresses that 'bargaining power is the key variable in determining the outcome of a bargaining process' (du Toit, 1987, 426).

Du Toit's observations are very important for a discussion of the mechanisms and the procedures that regulate elite behaviour in consociational democracies. The author's comments relating to the bargaining power that each segmental elite holds and its impact on the bargaining process and outcome are useful for an understanding of the complex context (i.e., the divided/deeply divided society) within which consociational mechanisms are designed to operate. Indeed, even with the presence and implementation of institutionalised measures of government rule (such as the executive grand coalition and the mutual/minority veto), it is often the case that the bargaining power each leader holds will affect the outcome of the bargaining process. A common manifestation of divided societies is the presence of a multitude of groupings of unequal size and power. As such, the procedural aspects of consociationalism differ considerably from the institutional mechanisms the model prescribes.

2. Case study: Nigeria

Along with other aims, Falaiye, in a doctoral study of Nigerian elite relations, seeks to investigate the failure of consociationalism in Nigeria. Falaiye argues that Nigeria did not adopt consociational practices by chance but that it was the result of a 'thoughtful and often determined effort... [that] had been motivated largely by the desire to overcome the peril of incessant confrontational politics that underlay ethnic jockeying for political power' (Falaiye 1990, 555). In other words, the author implies that the political elite had an understanding of the perils of political fragmentation. Moreover, according to him, the elite was aware that consensus could be achieved by bridging the gaps between the main segments, and solving disputes in a consensual climate. Hence, it may be said that the Nigerian political elite meets one of the four elite tasks that Lijphart specified.

Following this, Falaiye argues that the Nigerian experiment with consociationalism was not successful. He holds that it did not fundamentally re-order its politics. First, he argues that it did not 'provide for the institutionalization or regularization of an orderly political change or succession'. Second, he notes that it did not 'depoliticize ethnic politics either in the direction of harmonizing

¹³ Emphasis added.

the basic interests or ideologies of the “cartel of elites” representing the various political parties or ethnic interests or, as an effective catalyst of resolving inter-ethnic conflicts’ (Falaiye 1990, 555). Lastly, the author argues that it did not ‘serve as an accommodationist instrument or framework for all the basic interests of the polity’ (Falaiye 1990, 556).

To explain why the Nigerian consociational experiment failed to deliver the above-mentioned objectives, Falaiye blames the low quality of political entrepreneurship of the Nigerian elite: ‘This includes the inability to promote inter-group harmony among the Nigerian multi-national entities, the failure to instil a shared sense of political direction to the country and of commitment to one another, the unwillingness to play by the rules of the political game and to develop a workable framework of accommodation and compromise in politics as a means of governing their disparate socio-political entities’ (Falaiye 1990, 567).

Here, Falaiye’s argument concerning the elite ‘unwillingness to play by the rules of the game...’ (p.567) should be distinguished from his earlier statement that the elite had the ‘desire to overcome the peril...’ (p.555). In other words, the author differentiates between the desire to engage in consensual behaviour and the willingness to do so. Therefore, it can be argued that Lijphart’s second elite task, that is, a commitment to maintaining the system and to the improving of its cohesion and stability, was by and large absent. Similarly, the third and fourth elite tasks are also absent. These are the ability to accommodate the divergent interests and demands of the subcultures and the ability to transcend cleavages and to join in a common effort with the elite of rival subcultures. Consequently, according to the sketch that the author presents, the Nigerian political elite meets only one of the four elite tasks that Lijphart specified.

Falaiye argues that ‘in addition to the behavior of the elite (...) the consociational disposition alone cannot ensure political stability in plural societies unless, at the same time, there is conscientious husbandry of the economic resources to sustain the political process’ (Falaiye 1990, ii). The author holds that an efficient management of the economy is essential for the stability of the Nigerian political system as well as for strengthening the legitimate claim of the elites to rule (Falaiye 1990, 566). This argument is sustained by Chahine, who writes that ‘development must precede democracy in order for consociationalism to succeed in maintaining a peaceful multiethnic society’ (Chahine 1998, 61). As a conclusion, Falaiye deduces that consociationalism cannot solve all of Nigeria’s problems including its problem of political instability.

From the above, it is obvious that the author’s inadequate assessment of the elite disposition for consociationalism resulted in imprecise conclusions: the Nigerian political elite met only one of the

four elite tasks specified by Lijphart, as Falaiye notes. Consequently, it would be inadequate to conclude that 'consociational disposition alone cannot ensure political stability in plural societies unless, at the same time, there is conscientious husbandry of the economic resources to sustain the political process'.

While it may be true that the success (attainment and maintenance) of consociationalism requires a favourable economic situation, this cannot be asserted in the Nigerian case for two reasons. First, the political elite was shown to meet only one of the four elite tasks. Second, a cause and effect relationship between a favourable economic situation and stable consociational politics was not substantiated by evidence. As stated above, this is not to say that consensual elite behaviour alone is able to generate stable democracy. For instance, Sisk points to an important issue: 'Consociationalists have been criticized for the assertion that elites can effectively regulate conflict in divided societies' (Sisk 1996). However, drawing on the Anglo-Irish Accord of 1985 and the 1990 failure of the 1987 Meech Lake Accord, Sisk argues that 'even though political elites may agree on a formula for accommodation, peace cannot endure without grassroots backing' (Sisk 1996).

To sum up, this section first pointed out that consociational theory fails to identify a precise pattern of consensual elite behaviour. Second, it highlighted that it is rather difficult to determine what dictates elite behaviour under the consociational framework conceived by Lijphart. Consequently, in the light of the theory's vaguely defined four elite tasks, it may be said that Lijphart's framework allocates substantial reliance on the role of the elite in ensuring smooth consociational politics, and more so than the theory can handle, to validate its internal logic and consistency. It becomes problematic to determine whether consociational mechanisms are able to generate stable democracy, and more importantly, to affirm that such an outcome is the result of elite efforts.

E. Recapitulation

In the 1980s, there was a decreasing interest in consociational theory. First, scholars doubted that the elite would prefer accommodationist behaviour as opposed to confrontational or non-consensual conduct. Second, partisans of democracy were dissatisfied with a notion of democracy requiring low levels of popular participation. Third, the collapse or transformation of some "exemplary" consociational democracies created confusion about the explanatory power of the favourable factors, the key concepts and definitions. In response to these changes, Lijphart developed the concept of consensus democracy to broaden the theory while, at the same time, supporting his consociational model.

'The concept of consensus democracy grew out of my efforts to define and measure consociational democracy more precisely' (Lijphart 2000a, 429). In consensus democracy, 'every aspect can be expressed in quantitative terms' (Lijphart 2000b). Consensus democracy was first defined in terms of eight characteristics (...) and subsequently ten characteristics (...) that overlap but do not coincide with the four elements of consociational democracy. Lijphart argues that consociational democracy and consensual democracy are closely related, and that 'both can be used for empirical as well as normative purposes' (Lijphart 2000a, 425). He specifies that in a majoritarian democracy, the majority of the people 'do the governing', while in a consensus democracy, it is 'as many people as possible' as it 'seeks to maximise the size of these majorities' (Lijphart 2001, 90).

Two major criticisms of the concept of consensus democracy can be identified in the comments of Lustick, Kaiser and Andeweg. For instance, 'Lustick argues that so much stretching has happened that the entire enterprise has become meaningless' (Lijphart 2000b). Similarly, Kaiser writes that 'the difference between consociational and consensus is not completely comprehensible' (Kaiser 1997, 432). Andeweg, for his part, notices that 'consensus democracy has not replaced consociational democracy: the debate over consociationalism has continued without reference to consensus democracy and Lijphart himself has continued to apply the concept of consociationalism separate from that of consensus government' (Andeweg 2000, 514). Here, it can be said that contrary to consociational democracy, consensus democracy did not move the debate about democracy further, and thus, the model of consociational democracy continued to dominate the debate about power-sharing democracy, as opposed to majoritarianism. At the same time, while acknowledging the points of both Lustick and Andeweg, it should nonetheless be pointed to the difficulty of using exact measurement in the social sciences. This attempt by Lijphart was followed by his later rejection of precision and measurement in 1985 where he writes:

Precise quantitative measurement is usually very difficult if not impossible to achieve (...) It is much better to use a simple, rough, and indeed "impressionistic" twofold or threefold classification of the variables (...) and to relate these variables to each other than to spend all of one's time in a probably futile effort to find exact measurements. Methodological perfectionism is extremely debilitating for political theory and practice (Lijphart 1985, 87-8).

Lijphart holds that 'consociational democracy has been amply defined and [...] nothing needs to be added to it' (Lustick 1997, 109). Contrary to the approaches of Van Schendelen, Barry and Nordlinger, he stresses the impressionistic nature of the social sciences where evidence and/or logic are inconvenient. He reinforces his argument by referring to the researchers who supported his work, the various studies of the model in different countries, and the positive attention accorded to his theory of consociational theory.

Especially noteworthy is Lijphart's mid-1990s essay on India, where he classifies India as a consociational democracy. He argues that India was witnessing a period of instability because it had abandoned consociational practices. In this respect, Lustick considers that this essay reaffirms the impressionistic nature of the theory, the vagueness of its terms and definitions, the elasticity of its concepts and its wide selectivity. However, Lustick did not attempt to remedy the shortcomings of the theory, contrary to both Nordlinger and Daalder, whose contributions will be examined. For his part, Nordlinger 'anticipated most of the withering criticisms of Lijphart's work that would come in the mid-1970s and early 1980s- critiques of the imprecision of his terms, the awkwardness of his typology, and his mischaracterization of key cases' (Lustick 1997, 99-100). 'He [Nordlinger] tried to define terms [...] and specify propositions of consociationalist theory precisely enough to stipulate the empirical claims that were made and then distinguish those supported by available evidence from those that would have to be rejected or left for further study' (Lustick 1997, 99). For instance, in the words of Lustick, he advocated eliminating normative elements, searching the histories of countries cited as examples of consociationalism, specifying conditions needed for consociationalism success or failure and investigating the tension between democracy and elite accommodation present in the idea of consociational democracy itself.

Indeed, Nordlinger's approach was an attempt to remedy the uncertainty of the theory and to increase its explanatory and predictive power, as well as to unveil the undemocratic nature of consociational democracy. Similarly to Nordlinger, Daalder criticised Lijphart's theory as imprecise. Consequently, he went a step further and proposed the following research tasks (Daalder 1974, 616-20):

- * Investigating the differential effects of political culture on prospects for consociational regimes.
- * Exploring boundaries between democratic and nondemocratic consociationalism.
- * Explaining the decline of consociationalist structures in the Low Countries.
- * Analyzing the impact on consociationalist systems of cultural and ideological trends in the international arena.
- * Evaluating the capacity of consociationalist elites to absorb greater demands for participation from their constituencies.

The research tasks that Daalder put forward are clearly aimed at strengthening the utility of Lijphart's theory and increasing the use of the model to describe different political systems. While it is important to point out that this involves great difficulty, it is seen as a clear departure from theoretical contemplation. Against this background, it is becoming increasingly apparent that the theory suffers from serious inconsistencies that reduce its explanatory and predictive power. As suggested, the empirical inconsistencies within consociational theory are irremediable since, as Halpern points out, the confusion does not stem from the cases but from the construction of the model (Halpern 1986, 184). Hence, Halpern concludes:

The consociational universe is a random universe. It is confused by contradictions between the theory, and construction of the model, of consociational democracy as well as by theoretical imprecision (...) we cannot test for consociational democracy, confirm its existence, or track its development. Lacking this competence, we are without a demonstrable basis upon which to assert, in our capacity as political scientists, that there actually exists something called consociational democracy (Halpern 1986, 194-5).

Lijphart's latest defence to such criticism runs as following:

An especially valid and serious criticism is that its key concepts have been very hard to define and measure precisely. I have come to the conclusion, however, that this is an insoluble problem and that we shall simply have to live with concepts that have very important theoretical and policy significance but that cannot be measured precisely (...) The substantive problem is that the basic characteristics of consociational democracy are inherently stretchable: they can assume a large number of different institutional forms (Lijphart 2000b).

While Lijphart is right to point to the difficulty in defining key terms and concepts, it remains problematic to deduce that this is an 'insoluble problem and that we shall simply have to live with concepts that have very important theoretical and policy significance but that cannot be measured precisely', to use Lijphart's words. As Halpern rightly points out, 'the problem of conceptual broadness is not confined to the model of consociational democracy nor is it new to the study of politics' (Halpern 1986, 189). Therefore, contrary to what Lijphart advocates, this does not point to the impossibility of refining such key concepts to strengthen the consistency of the theory of consociational democracy and to enhance the utility of the model.

Indeed, while the findings of Chapter 2 limit the utility of the model, they do not, however, undermine the importance of the theory. Lijphart's consociational theory continues to receive significant scholarly attention and justifications for the application of the model to divided societies. Indeed, power-sharing mechanisms are instrumental in regulating rule in divided societal contexts. As such, the continuous development and elaboration of the consociational model appear to be a way of alleviating the weaknesses of the theory and expanding its prescriptive power. Indeed, this author adheres to the following view:

Power sharing and consensus politics do not have to be justified only by the negative consequences of their alternative (...), but on a more positive basis as well. Power sharing among societal groups can be justified because of the mutual dependence of these groups upon each other and because of their lack of alternative sources of scarce values (...) Consociational engineering, aimed at achieving the *elusive*¹⁴ goal of elite cooperation, should not just concentrate on drawing up constitutional coalitions, mutual vetoes, proportionality, and segmental autonomy, but should also adopt a wider perspective and concentrate on institutional mechanisms which create, maintain, and reinforce mutual dependence between societal groups (du Toit 1987, 426).

Hence, in line with the main orientation of this thesis, the major weakness of the theory appears to be the unsubstantiated attainment and maintenance of stable democracy under the consociational framework of rule devised by Lijphart. It therefore appears from the literature review undertaken in

¹⁴ Emphasis added.

this chapter that there is a need to elaborate the model to better meet the needs and peculiarities of divided (and particularly, deeply divided, i.e., plural) societies, thus echoing Steiner's and du Toit's suggestions to go beyond consociational theory. Indeed, the discussions undertaken in Chapters 4 and 5, which draw on the Lebanese experiments with consociationalism, reveal that the model fails in many instances to deliver on the promise of stable democracy unless accompanied by a considerable dose of internal mediation and external arbitration. Against this background, the proposed elaboration of Lijphart's consociational theory (suggested in Chapter 3) will be shown to appear as one way of somehow reducing the need to the substantial internal mediation and external arbitration that consociationalism involves. Chapter 4 will practically show in what ways the consociational model, as it stands, failed on the promise of democratic stability for pre-war Lebanon. As such, it will practically point to the shortcomings of the consociational model and to the need of introducing an elaboration to it. Chapter 5 will examine the significance and advantages (as well as the shortcomings) that this elaboration has on prospects for democratic stability in post-war Lebanon. As such, this thesis has raised a number of questions that seem particularly relevant within the context that this research operates in. It is hoped that the attempted answers of this thesis will be useful for the study of divided societies elsewhere than Lebanon.

However, to achieve this aim and the tasks of Chapter 4 and 5, some of the findings of this chapter (the imprecise, and broadly-defined definitions of the four components and of the key concepts of consociational theory) are useful in that they indicate the need to adopt more precise definitions. A meaningful discussion of consociational democracy as it operates needs more elaborate definitions. This calls the need to examine, define clearly the relation of consociational democracy with democratic theory. In other words, consociational theory would need to be located within democratic theory in order for elaborate and precise definitions to be devised.

Hence, this chapter introduced the theory of consociational democracy, analysed the criticisms that were offered against it (picking out on the central points as they relate to the context of the present research and assessing the real value of each contribution) in a series of steps towards evaluating the utility of the model and identifying the problems of working with the theory. However, to address in great detail the institutional and procedural aspects of consociational democracy, the next step of this thesis will attempt to define more adequately the key concepts of consociational theory. It is this author's contention that defining the key concepts as they relate to the Lebanese context (i.e., using Lebanon as a case study) will bring greater clarity to the model. This contention stems from the observation that Lebanon's successive experiments with consociationalism offer valuable clarifications and insights into the institutional and procedural aspects of consociationalism and thus, are a helpful testing field of the operability of the model in practice. Hence, the definitions

adopted will be based on the Lebanese societal context. Particular focus will be placed on the definition of the grand coalition in the light of the centrality of this principle of executive-decision making for the theory of consociational democracy, for the operability of the model and in the light of the important dimension elite rule takes in consociational theory. Additionally, an attempt to shed more light on the definition of the grand coalition will help alleviate the confusion that surrounds the concept, as devised by Lijphart, which limit the operability of the model and the utility of the theory. These tasks will be undertaken in Chapter 3.

Chapter 3 Consociationalism and democratic theory

As mentioned previously, the central question under examination in this thesis is the allegedly positive/causative relationship between consociationalism and stable democracy. However, the confusion surrounding the imprecise definitions of the four components and key concepts of consociational theory (highlighted in Chapter 2) suggests that it is difficult to accept that consociational politics (i.e., consociational structures of rule) can explain the stability of the divided society. In turn, this makes attempts to discuss the relations of consociationalism to democratic theory, to locate consociationalism within democratic theory and to examine the institutional and procedural aspects of the consociational model (in order to investigate the above-mentioned causative relationship) difficult and problematic. In consequence, this chapter will suggest more appropriate/relevant definitions, i.e., definitions that relate to the divided societal context within which consociationalism is designed to operate. It is the contention of the present study that only elaborate definitions can provide the possibility of re-examining the supposedly causative relationship between consociationalism and stable democracy.

The definitions that will be adopted will be based on the Lebanese societal context given that Lebanon provides a typical case study of consociationalism in operation. This results from its successive, relatively prolonged, and multi-faceted experiments with consociationalism. In other words, Lebanon presents a very rich field to test the operability of the model and to test the theory's promise of stable democracy. In the final analysis, Lebanon belongs to the classification of a plural society, and as such, examining the operability of consociationalism using Lebanon as a case study will shed more light on various aspects of the model.

After defining the major concepts that this thesis refers to, the discussion will delimit the scope of this study, thereby highlighting the various forces in play (i.e., in operation) within a divided society and the way in which they impact on the form of government that such a society finds itself with, and on the ensuing stability of the system. Subsequently, the discussion will focus separately on each of the four consociational principles and their relations to democratic theory. Finally, in the light of the many questions that this chapter will raise in regard to the causative relationship between consociationalism and stable democracy, the last section will point to the need of this thesis to look more closely at Lebanon, one of the most relevant, controversial and interesting case studies of consociational democracy in operation.

A. The study design

1. Definitions

From the outset, it should be indicated that the definitions used here are based on the societal context that this thesis is restricted to, and hence, do not conform to any prescriptive model. The literature review undertaken in the previous chapter traced the general area within which this thesis operates, namely a plural (i.e., deeply divided unstable) societal context. Hence, this section will first define what it is meant by a plural society. Lijphart's latest conceptualisation equates plural and deeply divided societies,¹ and this thesis will follow the same conceptualisation, i.e., plural and deeply divided societies will be interchangeably used as synonyms. However, when it comes to the definition of a plural society, the concept, as it is used here, refers to an unstable society where such instability is a direct consequence of that society's multi-faceted fabric (the multi-communal or multi-ethnic state),² and where such multi-faceted aspects remain highly politically salient (i.e., they have to do with class divisions). Indeed, it is important to point out that a society can be divided in many different ways, thus becoming a deeply divided society. Though it is difficult to determine where the dividing line between divided and deeply divided societies lies,³ a distinction which Lijphart's consociational theory fails to provide, the present chapter aims to shed more light on this distinction, so as to account for factors that lie beyond Lijphart's immediate focus.

Hanf notes that 'to grasp the reality of the social and political systems of multi-communal states, it is necessary to examine both their horizontal dimensions, that is, their socio-economic stratification and class structure, and their vertical dimensions, that is, their fissures or cleavages along communal lines as well as the linkages between them' (Hanf 1993, 21). Indeed, the factors in play in such societies that may cause tensions are not only limited to religious, cultural, ethnic, linguistic and racial differences, as Lijphart argues. This is because the world, social values and belief systems are constantly changing, and such differences do not eternally keep groups cohesive. This

¹ Indeed, for purposes of clarity, most researchers on consociationalism, such as Lustick and others, chose to use the concept of a deeply divided society as a synonym to that of a plural society. However, their definition of the concept is limited to vertical segmentation and fails to include the dimension of the horizontal class cleavages. For such limited accounts, see Ian Lustick, 'Stability in deeply divided societies: consociationalism versus control'. *World Politics* (April), Vol.31, No.3, p.325, 1979.

² To borrow Hanf's expression. For more on the wide usage of the concept of ethnicity and multi-ethnic states, see Theodor Hanf, *Coexistence in wartime Lebanon: decline of a state and rise of a nation*. London: Centre for Lebanese Studies [hereafter CLS] with I.B. Tauris & Co, p.14 and p.21, 1993.

³ Partly because, as Johnson points out in his detailed discussion of the manifestations of the plural society under examination in this thesis, Lebanon, there is 'a lack of any detail census information on class and confession in Lebanon...[hence making it] impossible to provide a definitive account of the relationship between the two variables' (Johnson 2001, 193). For more details on the analysis of the features of Lebanon's plural society, and the impact of the interplay between class and ethnicity on Lebanese stability, including a discussion of major works relating to this issue,

thesis acknowledges that culture and identity are part of the nature of a person. Indeed, the culture that a person has is created through a process of socialisation. It becomes a part of the cognitive aspects of that person, and is a means for people to differentiate themselves from other people. However, the cultural, religious and other distinctions raised by Lijphart are not the only influence on individuals as they are not in a static state, are highly nuanced, and do not always pervade individuals' lives. Rather, there are often wider aspects to their lives that determine their actions.

Thus, echoing Steiner's suggestion of including differences of a socio-economic nature (that are bound to remain if one looks at the course of history), this thesis argues that the factors causing tensions among communal groups in societies are also related to class and social injustices. In all countries, there is a sort of hierarchy of class (poor at bottom, generally unskilled service workers, semi-skilled workers, skilled workers, professional workers, business, commerce, trade and enterprises classes, etc). The point is that their position (as well as perceived position) in society is also in association with the income that they receive. In ethnically homogeneous societies, socio-economic differences are a potential threat to the stability of the system. However, as it relates to the context of a plural multi-ethnic society, the concept of class requires a more sophisticated analysis as it has multi-dimensional manifestations and hence, this increases the quotient of threat to the stability of the society in question.

Indeed, a first reminder is that social injustice, in and of itself, is a threat to the stability of the multi-communal society, irrespective of communal sensitivities. Furthermore, a second observation is that a cursory look at plural societies reveals that the latter tend to manifest a broad line of class differentiation among communal groups. For instance, in the pre-war Lebanese context, one can probably speak in general terms of Christian groups being socio-economically better off compared to their Muslim counterparts (particularly the Shi'is). Thirdly however, within cultural and religious differences, there are also cleavages of a social and class nature. As Johnson points out,

It is not always the case that one community is predominantly "upper" and another "lower" class in ethnic disputes; and even where there is some overlap between class and ethnicity as there was in Lebanon, explaining a consequent conflict in such terms as "poor Muslims" fighting "rich Christians" is an over-simplification. The ethnic or confessional fighters in the Lebanese wars were largely recruited from the poor and lower-middle-class members of the Muslim *and* Christian communities (Johnson 2001, 197-8).

Indeed, in relation to Lebanon, one can also speak of poor Christians within Christian groups and poor Muslims within Muslim groups (for example the Maronites of rural Mount Lebanon being less well off as compared to some the urban Orthodox and Catholics living in the coastal cities and

Sunni Muslims of the coastal cities being better off than Shi'i Muslims living in the suburbs of pre-war Beirut). Fourthly, one can also speak of poverty among individuals within the same sect (for example, poor Maronites within the Maronite community, poor Shi'is within the Shi'i community and so on so forth).

In society as a whole, for example the Lebanese one, these communal and class cleavages tend to cut across each other in complicated ways. Indeed, modern society is quite complex, is divided in different ways, and benefits accrues in different ways to different parts of that society. Within any grouping of peoples, one finds only a limited degree of homogeneity. In groupings, one also often finds that subcultures exist within a dominating culture. Within all cultures, there is a multiplicity of identities with varying intensity. Hence, it is the contention of the present study that when looking at communal groups, the sensitive issues among them do not appear to be solely religious, cultural, linguistic, and racial. Rather, they are also connected with the spoils of the economy, power, and rights. In other words, issues that are essentially political. As such, the concept of a plural society includes differences of a socio-economic nature and refers to an unstable society whereby such instability stems from the interaction and interplay between class and ethnicity.

This is so because in some plural societies, access to political representation and the allocation of economic resources are encapsulated in a confessional system of representation and patronage. Therefore, demands from poor and underprivileged citizens for a better allocation of resources within this society cannot be channeled and effectively articulated on class-based terms. These demands can only be channeled through the confessional system of political representation and the confessional patronage distribution system of economic resources. In other words, individual demands from poor citizens can only be articulated through communal groups, i.e., through communal leaders. Hence, ethnicity becomes the channel through which class cleavages are dealt with. In societies where class cleavages are clearly identifiable with one communal group being socio-economically better off than the other, the degrees of fragmentation and division are easier to discern, and perhaps, class cleavages are easier to be dealt with. However, in the plural society under examination in this thesis, class cleavages cut across communal groupings, making the society fragmented in a multitude of ways, hence making it more difficult to discern class division patterns between and among communal groupings. As a result, it is more difficult for the state to deal with class cleavages. Hence, ethnicity becomes for each communal grouping and sectarian leader, an effective channel to address the class cleavages within that grouping. This is so for mainly two reasons. Within a confessional system, the individual citizen is not allowed to exist and lobby for his immediate interests/rights on class-based terms. By extension, for the sectarian leader, ethnic identity is one effective channel or tool to articulate the interests of that citizen (and the

latter's perceived feeling of deprivation). As a result, the sectarian leader manages to build a support base (i.e., a clientele), through the confessional patronage system that keeps him in power.

Likewise, the concept of 'ethnic group' is used in consociational literature and in literature on ethnic relations as a synonym of communal group, as Lijphart notes (Lijphart 1995a, 854).⁴ This thesis will follow this conceptualisation, but will use the term communal group whenever possible, for the purposes of clarity. Lijphart defines an ethnic group as 'a group of people who see themselves as a distinct cultural community; who often share a common language, religion, kinship, and/or physical characteristics (...); and who tend to harbor negative and hostile feelings towards members of other ethnic groups' (Lijphart 1995a, 853). However, in the Lebanese context, Lijphart's concept has many limitations. In Lebanon, the apparent broad line of differentiation (apart from the underlying subcultures existing within each group and driven by socio-economic interests) takes on a religious character, thus making it more appropriate to speak of religious ethnicity. Thus, a communal group will be taken to mean a relatively cohesive group of people who see themselves as a distinct uniform religious community, sharing a common belief system and lifestyle, kinship-blood ties, cultural-linguistic, psychological, physical, territorial and national characteristics that provide a sense of belonging and attachment within a hostile societal context.

Concerning the concept of the elite, it is commonly understood that elites are the holders of power and influence. However, considering the central role of this concept in this thesis, this paragraph will elaborate on this general definition. In the Lebanese context, this conception of elites includes both the political and financial (i.e., economic) dimensions of power and influence. Indeed, Dékméjian stresses the 'uncommon degree of overlapping between the economic and political elite' in Lebanon observing that 'the political elite might be viewed as an extension of the economic elite'. In 1975, drawing on the composition of the political elite, he notices that 'political power [cabinet office] came after the acquisition of economic power and apparently because of it although there have been instances where the sequence has been reversed' (Dékméjian 1975, 22-3).⁵ Similarly, Khalifah notes that 'in a country [Lebanon] where economic and political powers are one, success in business is a prelude to political life' (Khalifah 1997, 12). Indeed, it is difficult to disengage political power from the economy of the country in which power resides in a comparatively small number of persons (a class of merchants, traders, financiers, landed and notable elites, both Christian and Muslim). Confessionalism provided a way for elites to manage the direction of affairs in order to secure their own interests and favourable accommodation among the

⁴ Indeed, he makes the point that 'the Christian and Muslim sects in Lebanon are commonly referred to as ethnic groups. They differ from each other in religion...' (Lijphart 1995a, 854).

⁵ The situation he describes is pretty much the same today in post-war Lebanon.

elites themselves. In other words, good economic cooperation among them was an important base for political unity because the presence of mutual economic interests was a very important incentive to cooperate on the political side. By extension, societal instability and conflicts had a detrimental impact on these mutual business interests. As a result, the interests of the nation were bounded up in the consociational confessional system of rule. Thus, the conception of elites refers to the holders of political and economic power, unless otherwise specified.

The concept of democracy, additionally, is crucial in order to understand the nature of politics and political theory. Scholars continually indicate the necessity of further reading with regard to democratic theory, and a more complete understanding of democracy as forming the basis for further developing theories. Political scientists have sought to provide different definitions of democracy. As a result, democracy is seen as a relatively elusive, contested concept. Democracy 'nowadays is not so much a term of restricted and specific meaning as a vague endorsement of a popular idea' (Dahl 1989, 2). In this regard, Johnson and Onuf argue 'there is a lack of agreement on the specific content of the democratic idea' (Johnson and Onuf 1995, 184): 'the word is used too freely and inclusively to make most answers possible' (Johnson and Onuf 1995, 179). However, for the purposes of this thesis, and because democracy is an important part of the rhetoric of politics, any meaningful discussion of democracy should specify and provide a clear idea of what is meant by the term. As Sartori observes in *The theory of democracy revisited*: 'we characteristically live, then, in an age of confused democracy. That "democracy" obtains several meanings is something we can live with. But if "democracy" can mean just anything, that is too much' (Sartori 1987, 6).

The procedural aspects of democracy, which point to an element of elite rule in societies (including plural ones), restrain democratic assumptions. This has the effect of confining the democratic assumptions, and delimiting the definition of democracy. Hence, Lincoln's 1863 definition of democracy as 'government of the people, by the people, for the people' is clearly not applicable. For the purposes of this thesis, the works of Schumpeter and others help to illustrate a more relevant definition of democracy. In this regard, it is important to point to the following distinctions.

First, many political scientists have stressed the elite nature of democratic rule. Lasswell, Lerner & Rothwell comment that 'as James Bryce and many other political analysts have remarked, government is always governed *by the few*, whether in the name of the few, the one or the many' (Lasswell, Lerner & Rothwell 1971, 15). Similarly, Lipset concludes his article entitled 'The social requisites of democracy revisited', that 'whether democracy succeeds or fails continues to depend significantly on the choices, behaviors, and decisions of political leaders and groups' (Lipset 1994, 18). Indeed, this argument points for the need of this thesis to draw a clear distinction as to the

institutional form or structure of democracy and the procedural aspects of democracy. The procedural aspects of democracy reveal more adequately how democracy works than do the structural aspects. Looking at the procedural aspects of democratic rule, what is often seen as democratic rule of and by the people is actually rule by an elite. Thus, the argument advanced by classical elite theorists concerning government by the few is considered particularly relevant here.

Concerning the second distinction, it is important to look at Prewitt and Stone's argument that 'if it is no longer possible to have government by the people, the goals of government of and for the people are still within reach' (Prewitt and Stone 1973, 186). In this respect, the procedural aspects of democracy suggest that this argument is applicable to divided societies, with the distinction that democracy in a divided society takes the form of a government of and for the communal groups (as mentioned above, broadly defined in terms of religious groups, but each of these, primarily bound by common political interests). In stable (and usually prosperous) societies, democracy is seen as government of, and for groups, bound by more fluid identities, i.e., not based on ethnic characteristics, driven by various secular and ideological interests and motivations, and where the structure of politics allows, despite a strong element of elite rule, the effective articulation of such group interests in non-ethnic terms and the lobbying for such interests with government agencies, legislators and in the electoral process. Moreover, constitutional rules in stable societies allow for such articulation of group interests, while in the plural societies under examination in this thesis, constitutional arrangements place restrictions on the articulation of group interests in non-ethnic terms.

However, in plural societies (above-defined as unstable), the ethnic/communal dimension that defines groups thus giving a communal shape to any given society stems from a situation where people seek to organise their living with others in the same society in ways that will allow them to benefit in/from this relationship. The role and political saliency of ethnic identity develops through the following scenario: one group has particular ethnic convictions, and in some way feels that their status and well-being are threatened by other groups. Indeed, as Haddad notes, 'although an individual has many identities, those perceived to be threatened tend to increase in salience' (Haddad 1985, 8). Enough of them feel this threat to identify with each other through common interests. They also are able to identify themselves through their ethnic belief systems and their conception of social order. Thus, Schumpeter's notion that the average man is motivated basically by self-interest and that particular interests tend to aggregate and organise themselves as interest groups is relevant for the purposes of this thesis. Hence, Schumpeter's view that democracy is essentially a way of dealing with group interests is applicable to the societal context that this thesis

operates in. So far, democracy will be taken to mean government by the few, of and for the communal groups.

Third, it is crucial for this discussion to take into consideration another of Schumpeter's arguments. In the words of Bachrach, Schumpeter proposed ' "government approved by the people", instead of the concept, "government by the people" ' (Bachrach 1967, 20), pointing out that people only have the option to accept or reject the few who will rule them. Schumpeter's definition is of importance to this thesis, provided that the government is approved by the communal groups (rather than groups based on fluid non-ethnic identities) through periodic, free, honest and competitive elections. Periodic elections refer to regularly scheduled elections. Free and competitive elections imply that all eligible citizens are allowed to present their candidacy and compete among each other for votes (thus leading to bargaining among groups). Finally, honest elections imply the existence of supervisory governmental and non-governmental bodies able to contest election results in an efficient manner (based on justifiable claims about the lack of transparency or dishonesty of the proceedings of the elections). Therefore, in light of the above definitions and in the context of divided societies within which this thesis is located, democracy may be defined as follows: Government by the few, of and for the communal groups, approved by the communal groups through regular, competitive, free and honest elections.

The concept of stable democracy itself requires definition. When it comes to the definition of the concept, it was pointed out in Chapter 2 that a considerable amount of confusion surrounded the notion of stable democracy. This section will present a somewhat different definition, in order to alleviate the confusion surrounding the concept. A first observation to be made is that if consociational theory succeeds in the causative relationship between the adoption of consociational devices in a divided societal context and stable democracy, this implies: the attainment and maintenance of stable democracy. A second observation is that researchers on consociationalism have used concepts of stable democracy as a synonym for democratic stability, stability and political stability. Such concepts have been used interchangeably. Hence, for the purposes of clarity, and equally to avoid confusion when referring to the work of researchers in the consociational literature throughout the various chapters of this thesis, this common, interchangeable use of the notion of stable democracy will be adhered to in this research.

More importantly, however, it should be stressed that for the purposes of this thesis, the most significant dimension of the whole notion is the term "stability", which is the dependent variable under examination in this thesis. First, because this thesis has already stressed the limitations of the concept of democracy, (shown from the procedural aspects of democracy), the notion of stability

increases in importance and the need for a more adequate definition takes on an unprecedented significance. Second, the various chapters of this thesis, through a discussion of the consociational model in operation in Lebanon, will stress the failure of the model preventing the outbreak of communal conflict, and delivering on the promise of stability, let alone democratic stability. Therefore, this thesis argues that it would be unwarranted to speak of democratic stability when the model in operation fails, in many instances, to provide minimal conditions for stability. For the purposes of this thesis, it seems more useful to re-define the concept of stability when it comes to the discussion of Lebanon.

Looking at societies, all of them demonstrate some degree of instability and crime. However, it may be said that stability exists where society is able to maintain and reproduce itself. There is a degree of civil order that allows this to happen and a system of rule that can be said to have legitimacy, and which can effectively supply the needs of its peoples. Civil wars, needless to say, indicate a breakdown of order. Similarly, national security breaches and political incidents (such as political assassinations, crackdowns on peaceful protests and the closure of media establishments for political reasons) indicate that the security situation in a given country may be volatile, and that the country remains a potential arena for conflicts to be played out. Such incidents threaten peace, indicate a blow to the security of society and have a saliency at a political level, thereby threatening political stability. More importantly, the inability of the national army and security apparatuses to preserve, on their own (such as the presence of foreign troops on national soil) the stability of society, is seen as a potential indicator of volatile stability. Most importantly, the inability of the political system as a whole, for instance the government and the key political actors and leadership, to effectively manage alone the internal political and economic stability of the society is seen as a major indicator of latent instability. For instance, the inability of Lebanese elites alone to maintain internal political and economic stability is such an example. The recourse to excessive internal mediation and external arbitration so as to regulate internal conflicts and to solve internal politically and economically salient disputes in Lebanon is a case in point. As a result of this, stability, when referred to in the Lebanese context, will be taken to mean the ability of local elites alone to maintain political, social and economic stability within the divided society.

2. Scope of study

Having defined the major concepts to which this thesis refers, it is now important to elaborate more on the societal context within which this thesis is located. Crucial to this discussion are the issues of group consciousness in a suspicious and hostile environment, the interplay between the various factors that make up the fabric of a plural society, the forces and actors in operation in a plural

society and the latter's impact on stability. The study of the impact that political leadership has on the stability of the plural society is crucial for the purposes of this thesis, as it is concerned with consociational democracy, which is an actor-centered model of rule. Insofar as this thesis takes Lebanon as a case study, the concept of ethnurgy advanced by Hanf is of unprecedented relevance. Despite Khalidi's argument that 'at the philosophical and metaphysical levels, it [the issue of identity] probably will never be resolved [as] humans have spent centuries contemplating the mysteries of the essences of things' (Khalidi 1989b, 379), it remains necessary for this thesis to shed more light on the nature of ethnic identity. In his article 'Ethnurgy: on the analytical use and normative abuse of the concept of 'ethnic identity'', Hanf writes:⁶

Ethnic identity exists, and it is more than a transitory phenomenon (...) [but] it is neither a natural nor an historical law. Rather, it can be fabricated and manipulated (Hanf 1995, 46)... On their own, one-dimensional economic or culturalistic approaches are inadequate analytical instruments to deal with this phenomenon [the conscious fabrication and politicisation of ethnic identity- and its attendant circumstances]. It is necessary to combine them (...) Multi-dimensional analyses have to take account of both stratification [horizontal class segmentation] and cleavage [vertical segmentation]. Stratification and cleavage are politically relevant only if people who share common distinctive characteristics also share a common awareness of their distinctiveness (Hanf 1995, 43)... The political leadership is always tempted to exploit such situations [socio-economic inequality] to raise the group's self-esteem, on the one hand, and to gain or retain popularity by aggressively articulating the sense of deprivation, on the other (Hanf 1995, 44)... Politicising ethnic distinctions shifts the struggle from divisible goods to indivisible principles. It becomes very difficult to regulate conflicts (...) [Ethnic groups] fear the loss of freedom or identity, and even their very existence (Hanf 1995, 45)... Ethnurgy is a highly efficient means of aggregating political interests, provided that the retention or acquisition of power, prestige or material advantage can be linked to ethnic group membership (...) Ethnurgy is most likely when a group believes it will derive benefits from it. There is no such thing as ethnicism for ethnicism's sake: ethnicism is always an ideology to legitimise power and privilege or to vent frustration (Hanf 1995, 47).

This thesis subscribes to the approach adopted by Hanf.⁷ Indeed, it recognises the existence of ethnic identity. Hence this author's argument is that communal identity and consciousness become activated in the advent of salient political issues, related to the uneven distribution of economic resources within society and the willingness of political leaders to maintain themselves in power. As Lijphart notes, 'from the 1970s on (...) there has been a remarkable resurgence of ethnic demands and conflict in the most modern parts of the world (...) Ethnic loyalties in most developing countries have persisted in spite of strong nation-building efforts' (Lijphart 1995a, 855). Ehrlich argues similarly by observing that 'as the world becomes more globalized, the world's citizens have shown a tendency towards reaffirming their own identities' (Ehrlich 2000, 461).

⁶ The particular suitability of Hanf's conception of ethnic identity for the Lebanese case will be presented at the beginning of the next chapter, before this thesis embarks on an examination of Lebanon's successive experiments with consociationalism.

⁷ Banton provides a similar account of ethnicity writing that 'ethnic differences do not cause conflicts, nor do two individuals come into conflict with one another simply because they differentiate themselves ethnically. Conflict groups have to be communities, that is, groups differentiated on several dimensions and with a sense of identification. Ethnicity is one mode of identification. Group organization implies a set of priorities and sets of this kind express what is distinctive about the groups' (Banton 1986, 14-15).

These scholarly observations take on an unprecedented importance when considering that most of the world's countries today belong to a multi-communal category. 'Although the nation-state is seen as the dominant form of political organization in modern history, in fact true nation-states are exceedingly rare' (Haddad 1985, 5). Hanf observes that 'at the end of the [twentieth] century, the culturally homogeneous nation-state has become the exception while the multi-communal state is now the rule' (Hanf 1990, 49).⁸ Similarly, Lijphart comments as follows: 'Saying that *most* countries in the world are ethnically divided may in fact be an understatement. It is more accurate to state that *almost all* of them belong to the multiethnic category. That this is so becomes especially clear when we try to think of examples of countries that are completely homogenous and that have no ethnic diversity at all' (Lijphart 1990, 491).

Kymlicka, Connor and Haddad provide a statistical overview. For Kymlicka: 'according to recent estimates, the world's 184 independent states contain over 600 living language groups and 5,000 ethnic groups. In very few countries can the citizens be said to share the same language or belong to the same ethnonational group' (Kymlicka 1995, 1). Similarly for Haddad, 'of the approximately 150 sovereign states active today, perhaps a dozen could legitimately be called nation-states' (Haddad 1985, 5). 'Approximately 8 states out of 10, existing now in the world, are composed of groups that distinguish themselves from each other by their religion, language or ethnicity' (Connor cited in Hanf 1990, 49).⁹

Equally important however is the existence of class cleavages in almost all societies, since communal identity does not automatically translate into communal hostility or societal fragmentation along ethnic lines. For instance, Hadenius argues that 'now, the fact is that states which are more ethnically and linguistically fragmented in general are characterized by a lower degree of economic and social development' (Hadenius 1992, 116). More importantly, however, if most of the world's countries are multi-communal and most of the world's countries are also developing countries, where socio-economic inequalities and class cleavages are the most acute, the interplay between communal and class cleavages appears to be a highly important factor in operation (or driving force) in a divided context, especially when bearing in mind that communal and class cleavages cross-cut considerably, as Hanf notes.

This description of the forces operating in a plural society takes on an unprecedented significance for the purposes of this thesis as the procedural aspects of democracy point to the important notion of elites in democratic rule, and precisely because the theory under investigation is an actor-

⁸ Translated from French.

⁹ Translated from French.

centered theory. Indeed, in the light of the elite nature of democratic rule as noticed by classical elite theorists, and because consociational theory explicitly prescribes a dominant role of elites in the rule of the multi-communal societies, the politicisation and manipulation of communal identities are a mechanism that elites, often, though not inevitably, resort to. As such, the politicisation of communal identity in a society riven by class cleavages plays an important role in destabilising peaceful communal coexistence and hindering stability and prospects for a stable democracy. As Hanf writes, 'politics in communal states, like politics everywhere, is about the distribution of power and wealth' (Hanf 1993, 32). Thus, the competition for scarce material benefits in such a divided societal context often results in elite efforts (most of the time successful ones) to politicise communal identity, a situation to which elites usually resort to maintain their power, and which they nourish through clientelism with members of their respective communities. In this way, the latter become a fragmented, dependent mass. With elites blocking any manifestation of national power through the manipulation of communal identity and the clientelistic network, this situation perpetuates divisions within society, and a national component to politics is continually lacking, thus damaging prospects for cooperation and stability.

It would be safe to say that the above observations point to the importance of the presence and politicisation of ethnic identity in a class-torn society, as well as their impact on the form of government that this society is likely to find itself with. It is argued here that the interplay between vertical and horizontal compartmentalisation and the actor-centered forces operating in such a society remain crucial for an understanding of the form of government that the latter is likely to adopt. It seems that such a context has a constraining impact on the creation and maintenance of democratic institutions and stable democracy. In the words of Mill and Lijphart, 'although democracy does not require a completely homogeneous society, it does require a minimum of social and political unity and consensus'. The degree of unity and consensus in multiethnic societies is generally below this necessary minimum' (Lijphart 1995a, 854). In similar vein, Lijphart argues that in divided societies, 'deep ethnic and other societal divisions pose a grave problem for democracy, and that *ceteris paribus*, it is more difficult to establish and maintain democracy in divided than in homogeneous societies' (Lijphart 2000b). Likewise, Monshipouri writes: 'social heterogeneity and inequality will adversely affect democratic institutions and values' (Monshipouri 1995, 38), and Dowty notes that 'ethnic and religious cleavages clearly make the achievement of democracy more difficult...' (Dowty 1999, 169). Lijphart further points to the fact that 'the problem of ethnic and other deep divisions is greater in countries that are not yet democratic or not fully democratic than in the well-established democracies...' (Lijphart 2000b). This observation takes on an unprecedented importance since most of the world's countries are in the process of creating and establishing rather than consolidating democratic practices and institutions.

In addition, Dahl's treatment of ethnicity goes into greater detail and makes it clear that 'in most countries, there exist a number of different lines of cleavage, and the intersection of these cleavage lines has produced a pattern of conflictive pluralism...' (Dahl 1978, 192). More specifically, Dahl addresses the impact of ethnic identity on the form of government that a divided society is likely to adopt pointing out that 'members of a subculture will strongly oppose any settlement on terms that fail to ensure the preservation of their subcultural heritage' (Dahl 1989, 255). Such observations point to the persistent danger of communal conflict and system breakdown in many parts of the world, most of which are developing countries still in the process of creating and/or consolidating democratic institutions and practices. Hence, peaceful communal coexistence and stability in plural societies (which are usually characterised by the presence of more than two communal segments) are difficult to achieve, and therefore require counteractive or corrective mechanisms.

3. Consociational democracy

Set against this background, consociationalists purport consociational theory to be able to deliver on the promise of stable democracy/democratic stability in plural societies. The remainder of this chapter will critically examine this contention. Having set the societal stage on which this thesis unfolds, it is now necessary to examine consociationalism's relation to democratic theory, in an attempt to shed more light on the allegedly causative relationship between consociationalism and democratic stability. Deegan argues that 'the development of the consociational model of democracy provides a variant of liberal democracy' (Deegan 1996, 56-7) and that it 'moved the debate about democracy one stage further' (Deegan 1993, 13). As stated previously, one manifestation of divided societies is the persistent danger of the outbreak of communal conflict, possibly leading to instability and system breakdown. One such mechanism has manifested itself as a possible remedy, namely, the purposeful attempt to reach compromise between the communal groups, chiefly undertaken by the political representatives of the divided society and strengthened by specific institutions. However, this should not be regarded as a successful solution. Rather, the consociational device appears to be a more appropriate remedy when compared with other corrective mechanisms (the immorality of genocide and expulsion and the frequent unfeasibility of partition, sometimes for economic reasons, and assimilation). It is argued in this thesis that such a mechanism is the more likely form of government that a plural society will find itself with. Indeed, the form of government that a society develops is related to a large extent to the particular circumstances within that society.

B. Grand coalition and elite rule

A closer look at one of the fundamental principles of consociational democracy, grand coalition and elite rule (i.e., at consociational theory's reliance on elitist politics), as defined by Lijphart, is bound to reveal the many shortcomings of the model in delivering on the promise of democratic stability for divided societies. This section of the chapter will point to the inappropriateness of the concept of "grand coalition", as defined by Lijphart, for plural societies and will suggest how elaborating this definition better suits the particular aspects of plural societies, and thus, the needs of such societies, for which the model was chiefly designed. Following this, the issue of elite dominance in the decision-making process in divided societies will be examined.

1. Grand coalition

As Lijphart notes, executive power sharing takes the form of a 'government by a grand coalition of the political leaders of all significant segments of the divided society' (Lijphart 1986, 35). The author specifies that the institutional set up of the grand coalition can take various forms: 'The most straightforward form is that of a grand coalition cabinet in a parliamentary system. In presidential systems, the principle may be achieved by distributing the power of the presidency and other high offices among the different segments. These arrangements may be strengthened by broadly constituted councils or committees with important coordinating and advisory functions' (Lijphart 1995b, 277). However, the author does not specify whether these councils or committees are part of the grand coalition. What are these councils or committees? Who do they include? Who do they fail to include? What is the nature of the "important coordinating and advisory functions"? Are these functions of a binding nature? Are these committees and councils part of the executive-decision making process? If they are, what significance does this have if their functions are only coordinating and advisory? How can they latter be important if they are only "coordinating and advisory"? What regulates the relationship of the grand coalition constituents to each other? Indeed, how is this relationship structured, and how are they related to each other? What is the basis for the relations among the grand coalition? Is it the power that is held by each coalition leader? Where does the power lie? The discussion below will attempt to clarify such issues of controversy.

In plural societies, the danger of the outbreak of communal conflict is reduced if *all segments* (ethnic groups) of society are represented at the *decision-making level*. The prospects for peaceful communal coexistence may be enhanced if the leaders or representatives of all the segments, rather than the significant segments, of the divided society share executive power. For instance, as mentioned in Chapter 2, Lijphart does not specify who is not a significant segment of the divided

society, and more importantly who/what decides who is not a significant segment of the divided society. Thus, a legitimate question to raise might be: What criteria determine significant segments as opposed to insignificant segments? It should be kept in mind that the model is designed to operate in deeply divided societies,¹⁰ in the sense that there is a considerable number of minority segments/groupings among the majority segments, oftenly with unequal size. Thus, if the model fails to provide them with equal power at the cabinet decision-making level, a clear problem of lack of representation (group exclusion) will manifest itself. Additionally, it is not clear how these "insignificant" segments will be able to use the constitutionally preserved consociational principle of mutual veto to protect the vital interests of their community if they are not represented at the executive level where mutual veto lies. Judging from the way Lijphart designs the concept of grand coalition, it appears that minority groups will always be dissatisfied, thus implying reduced chances for the prospects of democratic stability. Indeed, the problematic nature of group exclusion engendered by the model in that specific respect is important. Where divided societies are concerned, group exclusion at the decision-making level and the ensuing competition, are undesirable, as it does not appear to enhance the chances of democratic stability.

For instance, Prewitt and Stone argue that 'if elites can be made to be *representative of the masses*, then the democratic principles are not lost despite the unequal division of political power in society... Although rule might always be in the hands of a tiny fraction of the population, arrangements can be devised to insure that these few will represent the true interests and welfare of the people. Thus, if it is no longer possible to have government by the people, the goals of government of and for the people are still within reach' (Prewitt and Stone 1973, 186). Prewitt and Stone's points raise an issue central to the concerns of the divided society and to the concerns of the consociational model of democracy, that is, the issue of adequate wide representation. In a primarily elitist context, such as that of consociational theory, the further failure of the model to ensure representation wide enough to encompass all segments at the decision-making level is particularly troubling. As such, consociationalism, especially when looking at its procedural aspects, appears to be extremely elitist.

Indeed, the prospects for democracy are enhanced if a government is composed of decision-makers that are truly representative of society. This raises the point of the unequal division of power within the cabinet. Not only does the model fail to provide all segments, irrespective of their size, with representation at the cabinet level, but it also fails to take into account the relative power of each segmental leader within the cabinet. Looking at the procedural aspects of consociationalism, it may

¹⁰ As the Lebanese case demonstrates.

be said that within communal groupings, there is considerably diversity in views and interests which cannot be effectively articulated unless through narrow communal channels. Despite the guaranteed representation in the cabinet of significant sectarian groupings, the questions that arise are: Within each grouping, what is being guaranteed in the process and to whom is it being guaranteed? How are individual rights dealt with? What individual rights exist and how are they protected? Additionally, and bearing in mind the relative power and influence of the various significant segments (as plural societies are characterised by groupings of different size and power), despite their equal representation at the cabinet level, individual rights may not be protected similarly among the different groups. This seems to perpetuate divisions within the plural society, and hinders prospects for democratic stability.

Additionally, the grand coalition can be viewed as constraining in case of the absence of a qualified representative within a certain ethnic group. In this case, the chosen representative will be the most qualified among his grouping but not necessarily a sufficiently qualified representative.¹¹ Against this background, the failure of the model to include all segments, rather than significant ones, appears as a substantial impediment to the achievement and maintenance of democratic stability. Thus, the prospects for creating and maintaining a mood of cooperation (instead of competition), and hence, democratic stability will be improved by widening the scope of representation at the grand coalition level to include all segments of the society irrespective of their size. Indeed, a re-defined all-inclusive scope of representation within the grand coalition is central to the utility of consociational theory, as it significantly enhances the prospects for democratic stability and thus, increases the successful operability of the model.

Finally, some argue that the multiplicity of groups¹² hinders the applicability of the model, and hence, while the present study's suggestion to widen the scope of representation of the grand coalition may put further loads on the system in terms of ensuing deadlock and immobilism, it is important to say that this is not really the case. First, the representation of all segments at the decision-making level is one way of appeasing communal resentment. As such, the immobilism that may manifest itself is preferable to persistent societal dissatisfaction and unrest. Second, though it may appear that the power and influence of a "significant" group representative will overrule the rest, this is not so because all groups have the mutual veto power at their disposal. Additionally, if executive power is broadly shared by all groups, this may encourage the forming of intra-coalition

¹¹ As the case of the appointment of ministers in Lebanon indicates.

¹² For writers who notice that the multiplicity of groups hinders the applicability of the model, see Michael Hudson, 'The problem of authoritative power in Lebanese politics: why consociationalism failed'. In Nadim Shehadi and Dana Haffar Mills, eds. Lebanon: a history of conflict and consensus, London: CLS with I.B. Tauris & Co, p.233, 1988 and

alliances based on the identification of mutual interests. This may translate into the willingness to preserve and protect the latter and the effective ability to do so. As such, widening the scope of the grand coalition is seen as a way to counterattack the power and influence of significant groups within the coalition.

However, the role that the constituents of this coalition, the elites, play in creating and maintaining a stable system is also crucial. Executive decision-making in a consociational democracy rests in the hands of a ruling elite. As seen by Lijphart, consociational democracy is a 'government by elite cartel designed to turn a democracy with a fragmented culture into a stable democracy'. Again, consociational democracy is a 'political community where elites make deliberate efforts to counterattack the immobilising and unstabilizing effects of cultural fragmentation' (Lijphart quoted in Banks, 1987, 26). This discussion will now turn to elite rule.

2. Elite rule

For the purposes of this discussion, Lijphart's definition of consociational democracy, provided in 1969, is seen as significant. Here, he describes 'the essential characteristic of consociational democracy as not so much any particular institutional arrangement as the deliberate joint effort by the elites to stabilize the system' (Lijphart 1969, 213) or 'as overarching cooperation at the elite level with the deliberate aim of counteracting disintegrative tendencies in the system' (Lijphart 1968b, 21). This definition best illustrates the highly elitist character of consociational democracy, given that the institutional set up of the model and more importantly, the stability of the country, hinges solely on the elites. Furthermore, Lijphart's definition raises serious concerns in regard to the internal logic of the theory. Before examining this particular issue, a few observations should be made.

First, the discussions undertaken in the above section pointed to the problems of representation and lack of legitimacy of the grand coalition. The latter, in effect, the institutional set up of elite rule, was shown to be a highly elitist institution. Hence, when speaking of consociational politics in terms of elite rule/consensus (the main feature of the consociational model), the scope of representation of the grand coalition and thus, its legitimacy, appear weak. While theoretically, the grand coalition is intended to represent the interests of the various communal groups, thus failing to represent the interests of the entire country and of "insignificant" groups, the procedures point to another shortcoming. This is because, as often happens, such elites appointed as communal

representatives serve their own interests and those of their associates. In societies riven by class cleavages, this appears particularly problematic, as the competition over scarce resources often fails to allow such elites to serve the interests of their own communities, let alone those of the wider population. Hence, the scope of representation and legitimacy of the grand coalition is called into question in the eyes of the entire country and the communal groups, thus leading to permanent societal fragmentation and the absence of a sense of nationhood. Needless to say, this puts into question the ability of the consociational model of democracy to generate democratic stability.

At this stage, a reminder of the definition of democracy as is used in this thesis, is useful for the purposes of discussing elite rule. As argued in the section dealing with the definition of the notion of democracy, this thesis subscribes to the view of classical elite theorists, namely that democratic rule of and by the people is actually rule by an elite. It was pointed out that this is best seen by looking at the procedural aspects of democracy. Indeed, as Evans notes, classical elite theorists challenge the 'key premises of most Western liberal assumptions about politics...' highlighting the 'irrationality of liberal democracy...' (Evans 1995, 228-9). For instance:

Classical elitists...set out to show that the notion that the people or a majority of the people ruled was a chimera, and that whatever the form of government, the effective rulers constituted a narrow elite. Majoritarian democracy in any strict sense of the term was, in their view an impossibility, confirmed by the experience of history (Parry 1976, 141).

Numerous scholars share this conviction, such as Parry, who writes that 'the elitist argument is a much stronger one' (Parry 1976, 31) and Evans, who points out that 'elitism still provides a focus for the work of political scientists and political sociologists... and has presented a compelling critique of the liberal democratic model' (Evans 1995, 246). This thesis acknowledges the argument that 'elites, their connections and struggles, are of prime importance in shaping, threatening or changing democracy' (Etzioni-Halevy 1993, 1). More specifically for the concerns of the divided societal context within which this thesis operates, according to classical elite theory, 'the *nature* of any society- whether it be *consensual* or authoritarian, dynamic or static, pacifist or totalitarian, legitimate or illegitimate- is determined by the nature of its elite' (Evans 1995, 228).¹³ Mosca addresses the notion of minority control of the majority, arguing that:

In all societies- from societies that are very meagrely developed and have barely attained the dawns of civilization, down to the most advanced and powerful societies- two classes of people appear- a class that rules and a class that is ruled. The first class, always the less numerous, performs all political functions, monopolizes power and enjoys the advantages that power brings, whereas the second, the more numerous class, is directed and controlled by the first (Prewitt and Stone 1973, 3).

¹³ Emphasis added.

Similarly, while Dahl argues that 'in a collective decision, the good of all persons significantly affected by the decision should be taken into account' (Dahl 1989, 298), he is quick to note that 'this question has always been troublesome to advocates of democracy. While exclusions are invariably said to be justified on the grounds that the *demos* includes everyone *qualified* to participate in ruling, the hidden assumption dispatched to the shadow theory of democracy is that only some people are competent to rule' (Dahl 1989, 4). As stated earlier, this thesis, in its attempt to define democracy in divided societies, borrows from the work of Schumpeter, a major designer of democratic elite theory. Schumpeter's narrowing of the public realm, in order to bring the definition of democracy to realistic standards, best fits the form of government that divided societies are most likely to adopt. In the words of Parry, Schumpeter's book, *Capitalism, socialism, and democracy*, 'made a major impact on democratic theorizing. It has been regarded as the chief contribution to redefining democracy so as to accommodate an elitist situation' (Parry 1976, 144). Schumpeter argues that:

rational individuals demand democratic governance and they want badly that institutional arrangement for arriving at political decisions, in which individuals acquire the power to decide by means of a competitive struggle for the people's vote (Schmitter 1995, 129),

However, he also remarks that:

democracy does not mean and cannot mean that the people actually rule in any obvious sense of the terms "people" and "rule". Democracy means only that the people have the opportunity of accepting or refusing the men who are to rule them (Hadenius 1992, 15).

This thesis argues that Schumpeter's definition clearly delimits the realm of control that groups have over decision-making. Parry comments on Schumpeter's definition noticing that it 'avoids any connotation of direct democracy in which the people rule directly- a conception seemingly too "idealistic" or out-moded for twentieth century use. This definition recognizes, as Schumpeter points out, the vital role played by leadership in modern "democracies" ' (Parry 1976, 144). The conception of democracy provided by Schumpeter is particularly relevant in the light of the explicitly stated strong element of elite rule in consociational democracy. Such scholarly observations are invaluable for understanding the particular form of government that a society develops as the consociational model of democracy best fits the description of elite rule provided by classical elite theorists: When it comes to the successful operability of the consociational model of democracy, Lijphart rests this on the premise of the awareness of the elite of the dangers of communal conflict, their willingness and their ability to preserve the stability of the system. Each contention and its relations to democratic theory will be critically examined.

First, 'consociational solutions assume that sectarian or ethnic leaders are enlightened enough to realize that the societies in which they live are prone to destabilization and that caution must be exerted at the elite level to preserve stability' (Denoeux 1993, 105). This assumption made by consociationalists, in this case, Lijphart, concerning the enlightened elite who is aware of the inherent dangers of the divided society and who is able to counterattack the latter, needs to be critically approached. The distinction between the elite and the mass in this specific respect, of awareness, does not seem particularly clear. For instance, what does it mean to be aware/enlightened enough of the dangers of communal conflict? What criteria distinguish the level and nature of this awareness between different individuals? Among the elites, some may be more aware than others of such inherent dangers of communal conflict. In such a case, and bearing in mind that elites are first chosen according to their confessional/communal affiliation, how can less enlightened elites protect the interests of their respective communities adequately if they are less aware than other elites? What criteria of awareness determine the appointment of elites in the grand coalition and the election of others to parliament? Additionally, if the first criteria for the appointment/election of elites is communal affiliation, with awareness being only the second criteria, can it be said that this does not put the stability of the plural society first? If the consociational model is essentially designed to generate stability (and democratic stability), would it not be more appropriate to speak first of awareness of the elites as a primary condition, rather than their communal identity? Also, as mentioned previously, within a certain grouping, there may be no qualified representative. In this case, the chosen representative will be the most qualified among his grouping but not necessarily a sufficiently qualified representative. Can it be said that this will affect the prospects for the generation and maintenance of stability? Needless to say, this brings the discussion to the original questions: what does it mean to be sufficiently enlightened and how is this enlightenment achieved?

Additionally, this becomes more problematic when looking at the second contention made by Lijphart's consociationalist theory, which requires leaders 'capable of creating solutions to the political problems of their countries' (Horowitz 1985, 573 quoted in Yagcioglu 1996). For instance, Lijphart argues that 'politicians can change the course of a country if they so desire'. A question that arises is: What if the communal leaders are collectively aware enough of the dangers of these problems, have the desire and willingness to overcome them, but are incapable of doing so? In plural societies, that is unstable societies torn by acute class inequalities, this is often the case (as the Nigerian case study in Chapter 2 reveals). In such cases, how can the stability of the system be maintained?

The third contention made by consociationalists relates to the willingness of the elites to preserve the system. According to Lijphart, the consociational model is viable because the elites play a crucial role in the creation and maintenance of democratic stability. That may very well be the case, only if the elites wish to play that role. What if they do not play that role? In that respect, the procedural aspects of democracy suggest that this may very well happen. Even if the elites are sufficiently aware of the dangers of communal conflict, and even if they have the ability to counterattack the latter, they are not likely to do so and protect the survival of the system unless they think there are common interests and benefits to derive from their relationship with the other elites and unless they manage to benefit effectively from this relationship. As such, the nature of elite rule in consociational democracy suggests that there is a structural problem in the organisation of political rule. This questions the so-called consensual role of the elites, and hence the alleged ability of the model to generate democratic stability.

3. Political constraints

The procedural aspects of the grand coalition and elite rule have significant political implications on the realm of control that the mass finds itself with. Consequently, it has significant implications on the substantial amount of societal unrest as a result of mass exclusion from politics. Earlier discussions of democracy pointed out that in stable societies, democracy allows citizen participation beyond the vote, and the structure of politics allows for the effective articulation of group interests in non-ethnic terms, and the ensuing lobbying of such interests in various institutional means. In plural societies however, the elites' politicisation and manipulation of ethnic/communal identity leads to the nearly perpetual fragmentation of society, thus hindering prospects for the emergence of a class-based group, effectively able to lobby for its interests on class-based, non-ethnic terms. In this respect, Pinkney observes that 'the exclusion from power of a social class is thus seldom total' (Pinkney 1993, 12). As argued earlier, the structure of politics and constitutional regulations under the consociational system of rule does not allow for an effective articulation of group interests based on non-ethnic terms. While there often exists a number of groupings driven by secular motivations, the system does not allow their interests to be represented in meaningful terms, as the basis of effective representation allowed by the system remains on communal terms. As Steiner argues, 'the more conflicts in political systems are regulated by proportionality [as opposed to the majority model], the greater the tendency for ordinary citizens to have no functional channels for the articulation of dissent at their disposal' (Steiner 1971, 68). As a result, what often happens is a loss of mass democracy and a fragmentation of society, where the constituents of the various communal groups are forced to resort to the dependent clientelistic relationship. As such, the

politicisation of ethnic/communal identity keeps the elites in power, thus accommodating the common interests of the elite cartel.

Against this background, consociationalism, chiefly concerned with the alleged ability of the elite to create and maintain democratic stability, significantly fails to take into account the substantial amount of societal unrest that emerges from such a situation. This hinders prospects for stability. Indeed, consociationalists argue that in an effort to generate stability, citizen participation is neither necessary, nor indeed desirable. For Lijphart, the elitism of consociationalism 'should not be compared with any ideal of equal power or citizen participation' (Deegan 1993, 13). Put more adequately in the words of Halpern, one of the strongest critics of consociationalism, consociational theory holds that divided societies can be stable if 'the conflicting subcultural groups are kept apart, and their elites are given the necessary latitude to govern together in a coalescent manner' (Halpern 1984, 2). This view seems to fit closely with the observations of elite theory, namely that 'the political passivity of the great majority of the people is not regarded as an element of democratic malfunctioning but on the contrary, as a necessary condition for allowing the creative functioning of the elite' (Bachrach 1967, 32) and that 'the mass is typically "atomized". Its members are not organized for concerted political action' (Parry 1976, 54).

Indeed, the situation of the mass described above which results from the structure of rule of consociationalism justifies the observation by elite theorists that the mass is fragmented. It becomes increasingly apparent that the consociational model suggests that the necessary, sufficient conditions for the creation and maintenance of democratic stability rest on the formation of an elite cartel. Beyond any doubt, the internal logic of the theory and the model's ability to generate democratic stability are seriously questioned, as the theory fails to take into account the fragmentation of the real constituents of the plural society, the mass. As Deegan observes, 'the action basis and manoeuvrability of citizens is curbed to elections' as 'consociationalism is not chiefly concerned with an ideal of equal power or citizen participation beyond the vote' (Deegan 1996, 57). It would seem pertinent to argue that social unrest is substantial in a situation where citizen participation in politics is restricted to such an extent and more importantly, the grand coalition and elite rule sometimes fail to adequately represent the interests of the population and to protect their interests, at both the inter-and intra-group levels.

Most importantly, consociational theory assumes that the mass is deferential and has low levels of interests in politics. This may be so as the model was originally devised by Lijphart from his observations of the Low Countries, in which the mass has relatively low levels of interest in politics. However, this questions the operability, and thus, the utility of the model for other

societies, where interest in politics is high, mainly because the plural society is significantly torn apart by class cleavages. Hence, it should be said that the internal logic of the theory is put into question as it would be simplistic to assume that the mass would prefer passivity to high interest in politics. It would be simplistic to assume that the mass is unaware that consociationalism's emphasis on deference and passivity among citizens is 'desirable to consociational elites and theorists; because it enables elites to conduct their political affairs with considerable freedom from public scrutiny and involvement' (Banks 1987, 150-1). In other words, if the mass is fragmented and forced to resort to the clientelistic network (as a result of the politicisation of communal identity), this does not mean that it is unaware that the excessive room for manoeuvre for the elites comes at its own expense. This also brings to mind the argument above of the "enlightened enough" and "aware enough" elite. The elites are obviously chosen from the mass, which is allegedly unaware, deferent and passive. As such, how can they be aware and enlightened enough of the dangers of communal unrest?

Numerous critics of consociationalism emphasise the "undemocratic" nature of decision-making, involving only elites of various segments, with a resultant loss of mass democracy.¹⁴ The present discussion has dealt with the most important critiques advanced in this respect. Similarly, the issue of accountability of elected officials to citizens in a consociational democracy should be raised. Consociationalism perceives accountability as undesirable. As Farah notes, consociationalists argue that 'apart from undermining the outcome of coalescent elite behavior, extensive accountability and its control may even upset the coalescent elite behavior in a more fundamental, procedural sense, by turning it into adversarial behavior...' (Farah 1975, 13). Again, it would be safe to argue that the amount of social unrest at the mass level would be significant when citizens are unable to effectively hold the elites accountable for their actions. Especially in plural societies, where the various communal groups may harbor hostile and suspicious feelings against each other, the desire to hold representatives of other communal groups accountable for their actions is particularly strong. The elites may not always be able to restrain their followers. Similarly, it is often the case that elites do not keep playing a consensual role within the elite cartel, as conflicts at the elite level are frequent. In such cases, the consociational model may be said to be too simplistic to expect

¹⁴ For such accounts, see Sue M. Halpern, Consociational democracy and the dangers of politics as science. Doctoral Thesis. Oxford: University of Oxford, 1984, p.120; Timothy Sisk, 'Power Sharing in multiethnic societies: principal approaches and practices'. In Gail Lapidus with Svetlana Tsalik, eds. Preventing deadly conflict, Strategies and Institutions. Proceedings of Conference in Moscow, Russian Federation, 14-16 August 1996, [A Report to the Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflict, Carnegie Corporation of New York, free of charge], 1996. www.ccpdc.org/pubs/moscow/moscow4.htm, [accessed in July 2002]; Dimitris Chrysoschoou, 'Between decisional efficiency and responsible government: the EC in search of a balancing act'. [Unpublished conference proceedings quoted with kind permission from the ECSA General Secretary]. Paper presented at the Second ECSA World Conference, "Brussels 5-6 May 1994". www.ecsanet.org/conferences/1dn.htm [accessed in November 2002] and Brenda M. Seaver, 'The regional sources of power-sharing failure: the case of Lebanon'. Political Science Quarterly (Summer), Vol.115, No.2, pp.253, 2000.

passivity and restraint from the followers. Finally, and as argued previously, the scope of representation of the grand coalition has been shown to be highly elitist, thus always leaving minority groups unsatisfied.¹⁵ Again, and in short, the model appears too simplistic to assume mutual restraint from raising accountability concerns between the elites/mass and within the elite cartel itself. Against such a background, this puts into question the internal logic/assumptions of consociationalism and its ability (i.e., the elites' ability) to generate democratic stability for plural societies. Wantchekon, in his critique of consociationalism, pertinently doubts the consociational 'peace'. Best phrased in his words, 'this model of democracy can make electoral outcomes so predictable and so meaningless that it could hinder accountability, good governance and ultimately political stability' (Wantchekon 2000, 340).

As noted previously, the form of government that a society develops, in this case an elitist one, is determined by the nature of this society and the various forces at play within it. Just as the consociational model comprises political (allegedly corrective) devices aimed at preserving stability in a divided society, it also prescribes social counteractive mechanisms designed for the same end. The following discussion is an attempt to assess the appropriateness of the model's social counteractive devices for such societies.

C. Segmental autonomy

The second consociational principle, that is segmental autonomy, or rather, a high degree of autonomy for the segments of the plural society, prescribes the delegation of as much decision-making as possible to the separate segments (Lijphart 1986, 35). In other words, on all issues of common concern, the decisions should be made jointly by the representatives of the segments. 'On all other issues, decision-making should be left to each segment' (Lijphart 1995b, 278). While Chapter 2 pointed to the many problems associated with the practical operability of this consociational principle (because of its vague definition), this section of the thesis will deal with the impact this principle has on the plural society, i.e., its permanent fragmentation.

For Lijphart, segmental autonomy means the freedom of 'clearly separate and easily identifiable segments' [the characteristic of the plural society according to Lijphart] to run their own affairs: 'political parties, interests groups, media of communication, schools, and voluntary associations tend to be organised along the lines of segmental cleavages... [whether] of religious, ideological, linguistic, regional, cultural, racial, or ethnic nature' (Steiner 1981b, 340). The underlying

¹⁵ As the Lebanese case demonstrates.

assumption of consociationalists is that the danger of the outbreak of tensions and conflicts will be reduced if there is a minimal level of contact between the different “atomised” individuals, and that this can be achieved when the state recognizes and gives guaranteed rights to the different groups to preserve their distinct cultural heritage, traditions and belief systems through ideological tools such as communal schools and communication medias and even through political parties and interest groups.

A first critique that can be offered is that such an organisation of society effectively politicises and manipulates communal identity, thereby hindering the emergence of class-based consciousness among individuals of different communal groups who share the same socio-economic status. Indeed, the extent and nature of communal decision-making that the consociational model allocates to the different groups suggests that consociationalists consider the notion of ethnicity as a static and immutable force, a contention rejected in this thesis. Rather, this thesis points to the saliency of socio-economic and political (power and influence) forces in play in any given society. In fact, two central features of the consociational model, horizontal and vertical communication, (discussed below), illustrate consociationalists’ static view of the notion of ethnicity. The consociational scenario in this respect can be said to foster the permanent fragmentation of plural societies. Indeed, the description provided by elite theorists of society appears very pertinent:

Horizontal contacts between members of the society break down and are replaced by vertical contacts between atomized individuals and the elite (Parry 1976, 55-6). The public is best understood as an atomized and fragmented mass, capable only of responding to the leadership of superior elements in society. Only the elite can transcend their own milieux and develop a vision of a different society. The masses are trapped in their milieux, and depend on the visions provided to them by an elite (Prewitt and Stone 1973, 21).

Clearly, the pertinent description of society provided by elite theorists fits the situation that a society will find itself with under the consociational framework of rule. The following sections will critically examine the so-called detrimental impact of subcultural contact (horizontal communication) on the stability of divided societies and the so-called counteractive device (vertical communication) that consociational theory prescribes as a remedy. Deegan, referring to the principle of segmental autonomy, notes that this ‘strong characteristic of consociationalism, the separate autonomy awarded to each sect’ would contribute ‘to a certain degree’ in containing societal fragmentation (Deegan 1993, 13). This contention will be critically examined.

1. Horizontal contacts versus vertical contacts

First, consociationalists prescribe minimal contact between the members of the various communal groupings. The internal logic of such a prescription deserves to be critically approached. A question

that arises is the following: how would one go about decreasing the contacts between confessional groups? As it is, through the normal process of working, living in society, joining the military and the national universities and schools (a very common manifestation in plural societies torn by socio-economic crises since such public institutions are free of charge), etc subjects the ordinary citizen to considerable contact with other people, i.e., people from other communal groups. Thus, the internal logic of this contention does not appear particularly sound.

For Lijphart, 'in case of low integration...political stability can be enhanced by deliberately reducing the volumes of transactions. He further suggests that amalgamation itself is a strong generator of transactions and should therefore be reduced' (Farah 1975, 17). It should be said that a number of political researchers share consociationalists' prescription of minimal subcultural contact. For instance, Deutsch and Etzioni's descriptions of the so-called detrimental impact of subcultural contact on a divided society are particularly useful. According to Deutsch, 'the number of opportunities for possible conflict will increase with the volume and range of mutual transactions, because these transactions throw a burden upon the institutions for peaceful adjustment or change' (Farah 1975, 17). Etzioni similarly proposes that 'until nationwide education produces shared values, separation of groups adhering to incompatible values helps preserve even the small amount of unity existing in many new nations... If communication is developed more rapidly than education, the tension level in these societies may increase' (Farah 1975, 7). While the argument that education serves as a medium for bridging gaps between the members of the various communal groupings in cases of low integration is somehow convincing, it is not clear how such a unity would come about if the members of the communal groupings attend their own communal schools and only interact with members of their respective groupings, as consociationalism prescribes. As such, the model appears to encourage divided societies to remain divided.¹⁶

Additionally, the way that segmental autonomy prescribes the undesirability of horizontal communication also prescribes that vertical communication (that is, elite/masses contact) be more important and effective. As such, members of different groups are therefore forced to rely on their respective representatives in order to safeguard and preserve their political, economic and social rights. The basis of political, social and economic advancement of any group thus depends on its leader. Looking at the procedural aspects of the elite/constituency relationship and bearing in mind the somehow dependent clientelistic network in existence, the politicisation of communal identity manifests itself frequently. It thus fosters the permanent fragmentation of society. Beyond any doubt, this questions the ability of the principle of segmental autonomy to generate democratic

¹⁶ As the Lebanese case, examined in detail in Chapters 4 and 5 reveals.

stability. In other words, the dependence of the members of the various groups on their representatives puts them in a passive state, whereby they are unable to challenge/change such a situation. However, mass impotence and passivity should not be regarded as societal stability. Rather, such a situation suggests latent unrest, likely to manifest itself in due course if socio-economic conditions worsen.

2. Communal groups versus interest groups

More important in terms of this perspective of society is the emphasis on communal groups that the consociational model fosters. This emphasis on communal groups as the sole constituents of society significantly hinders the emergence of non-political interests groups who are not lobbying for any political rights in the first place, but are trying to effectively channel their various secular ideas and their views on civil society and personal status codes.¹⁷ According to the consociational model when it relates to the principle of segmental autonomy, the state exists to promote the cultural rights of communal groups.¹⁸ As such, it can be said that the theory goes to the extreme of ignoring the rights that individuals are entitled to, especially if they wish not to affiliate themselves to any of the ethnic groups.

Indeed, though this thesis prescribes to the idea that democracy is best seen as a way of dealing with group interests, when talking about segmental autonomy, which deals with communal affairs that do not have political saliency, individual rights should be taken into consideration in a more significant and extensive way. While consociationalism views individuals as belonging primarily to their respective communal groups, this does not always pervade their lives and they may very well have different inclinations, that consociationalism does not seem to take into consideration. Indeed, consociationalism seems to ignore the fact that religious consciousness and religiosity belong to the private realm of a person and may not always be the driving force behind a person's activities. When it comes to individuals who are atheists, consociationalism appears to prevent their social advancement as their interests are only catered for in ethnic terms. Additionally, when it comes to individuals who consider religion as a private element of their lives, and do not wish to affiliate themselves with their respective communal groupings, consociationalism fails on the advancement of their cultural and social values. This is best seen when looking at issues like personal status codes (such as marriage, inheritance and the like). Indeed, the inexistence or ineffectiveness of civil status

¹⁷ Such as the failed attempt by secularly driven Lebanese politicians, such as the President of the Republic, to introduce a law allowing optional civil marriage.

¹⁸ For a very pertinent comparison between the ways group and individual rights are dealt with in liberal democracies and consensus systems of government, see Sammy Smooha and Theodor Hanf, 'The diverse modes of conflict-

codes and of secular civil courts in many countries suggests that consociationalism, through the principle of segmental autonomy, does not recognise the existence of such individuals and fails to cater for their needs. As such, they are forced to affiliate with their group, thus compromising their own principles, in order to bring an element of order and legitimacy to their lives (such as marriage and inheritance). In other words, segmental autonomy allows for the heavy involvement of religion into personal private life, thus leading to personal frustration for individuals.

3. Socio-cultural constraints

It is now important to highlight the constraints that the principle of segmental autonomy imposes on the advancement and social modernisation of plural societies. While this consociational device increases each group's sense of security by maximising its control of its own destiny, it is problematic to argue that it contributes in creating and maintaining a system able to generate a stable democracy. Indeed, this thesis subscribes to the view that cultures are not fixed eternal entities, while consociationalism is not positively responsive to cultural changes that occur in society. Consociationalism does not cope adequately with the dynamics of cultural change. Cultures are always changing, usually slower than other changes that are occurring in societies. Societies, through the logic of the concept, contain cleavages. However, they also have commonalities within them. Societies are not tribes. As modern societies change, there is a tendency for commonalities to increase. When faced with similar criticisms that the consociational model appears discriminatory (in this respect as well as other respects that will be discussed later), Lijphart developed his concept of self-determination, as opposed to the concept of pre-determination, and set out to extend it to all four consociational components: 'all the consociational principles can now be instituted on the basis of self-determination' (Lijphart 1995b, 282).

As regards the definition of the concept of self-determination, Lijphart argues that it 'refers to a method or process that gives various rights to groups *within* the existing state- for instance, autonomy rather than sovereignty- and it allows these groups to manifest themselves instead of deciding in advance on the identity of the groups' (Lijphart 1995b, 275). More clearly, 'it is to set up a system in which the segments are allowed, and even encouraged to emerge spontaneously- and hence to define themselves instead of being pre-defined' (Lijphart 1995b, 280). Concerning the definition of the notion of pre-determination, Lijphart explains that 'like self-determination', his concept of pre-determination 'refers to an internal process but in contrast with self-determination, it means that the groups that are to share power are identified in advance' (Lijphart 1995b, 276).

Briefly, he states that in most cases, 'unless there are compelling reasons to opt for pre-determination, the presumption should be in favor of self-determination' (Lijphart 1995b, 283-4). He bases his preferences on the fact that 'pre-determination is inevitably discriminatory- in favor of the groups that are included, and against groups, especially smaller groups, that are not recognized'. Finally, he holds that pre-determination 'entails the assignment of individuals to the specified groups, which may be controversial, offensive, or even completely unacceptable to many citizens. It also means that there is no place for individuals or groups who reject the premise that society should be organized on an ethnic or communal basis' (Lijphart 2000b).

While Lijphart's elaboration on the model in this respect is salutary, it may be argued that the concept of self-determination is at odds with the widely accepted argument (from consociationalists as well as its critics) that the chances for the success of consociationalism increase with the presence of a relatively small number of segments, ideally between three and five, as advocated by Lijphart. Likewise, the chances of consociationalism breakdown increase with the presence of a relatively large number of segments. Numerous scholars have recognised the causal relationship between small group number and chances of success.¹⁹ Clearly, this puts a strain on the practical operability of the model. Therefore, since the self-determination concept encourages 'groups, especially smaller groups, that are not recognized' to emerge and define themselves, this is seen as a possible threat to the stability of the system, and runs against the background conditions established by Lijphart for the creation and maintenance of a stable democracy. Rather, it may be argued that encouraging the emergence of such groups may be salutary to the operability of the model if the theory prescribes at the same time, the simultaneous dismantlement of the rigid structure of the communal groups and a shifting of loyalties from narrow communal interests to more secular and ideological motivations. However, as Lijphart's concept of self-determination stands at present, it does not seem to promote democratic stability and hence, renders the operability of the model more problematic.

Additionally, numerous critics of consociationalism argue that the consociational model keeps divided societies more divided in many respects that will be presented here. First, central to this argument is the observation many scholars make concerning the role that the elite plays in that respect. For instance, 'Tsebelis suggests that consociational institutions may provide incentives for politicians to foment conflict along group lines in order to bolster their own bargaining position vis-à-vis other groups at the political center- what he terms "elite-initiated conflict" ' (Tsebelis 1990 quoted in Sisk 1996). In similar vein, Horowitz advances the notion of elite-initiated conflict and

¹⁹ For instance, see As'ad Abukhalil, The politics of sectarian ethnicity: segmentation in Lebanese society. Doctoral Thesis. USA: Georgetown University, p.274, 1988.

writes: 'There is no reason to think automatically that elites will use their leadership position to reduce rather than pursue conflict' (Horowitz 1990 quoted in Sisk 1996). This critique is consistent with the assumption advanced by Mosca and Michels that 'the elite cultivates its coherence and consciousness whilst adopting towards the mass a policy of "divide and rule" ' (Parry 1976, 55-6). This scholarly consensus as to the role that the elite plays in keeping divided societies more divided takes on an unprecedented importance in light of the classical elitist argument outlined above and in light of the substantial reliance of the consociational model on elite behaviour. Beyond any doubt, elite-initiated conflict (best viewed when looking at the procedural aspects of elite rule) regarding social/communal issues related to lifestyles, shared values, traditions and belief systems hinders prospects for democratic stability.

Second, a number of researchers argue that the consociational principle of segmental autonomy fosters ideological, national and territorial separatism rather than integration. In this respect too, the role of the elite is seen as a major factor in downplaying notions of unity, civic consciousness and nationalism. For instance, elite theory argues that 'the mass is able to act as a single unit only when it is integrated from outside by the elite. Leadership can transform the mass from an aggregation of isolated units into a solid, unified group. But this unity is entirely artificial. It does not arise spontaneously from within the mass' (Parry 1976, 55). In this respect, it is important to point to the advantages of liberal democracy that 'fosters civility, namely, a common domain of values, institutions and identify, at the expense of communalism. It equates nationalism with citizenship and the state with civil society' (Smootha and Hanf 1992, 33).

Third, many researchers argue that the consociational model underestimates the consequences that mass fragmentation can have on the stability of the system and overestimates the capacity of elite accommodationism to stabilise the system. Seaver points to a related issue, arguing that 'a number of social scientists moreover, assert that consociational devices increase friction in plural societies because many socioeconomic problems are ignored to avoid intersectorian conflicts' (Seaver 2000, 252). More specifically related to the above point, Horowitz 'questions the consociational focus on accommodation at the elite level, and is concerned that consociational arrangements reinforce the importance of ethnic or religious cleavages' (Grofman and Stockwell 2001). Indeed, Farah observes that 'subcultural hostility remains significant at the mass level' (Farah 1975, 15). Seaver's observation that 'social scientists have argued that consociational democracy may exacerbate, rather than ameliorate, intercommunal tensions' (Seaver 2000, 252) is particularly relevant. Consociationalism can be said to encourage the emergence of a differentiated culture. Against this background, it is not entirely clear how and when a system of shared values, as Etzioni argues

above, will emerge. Approaches similar to Etzioni's may be criticised for their reductionist understanding of human beings, and for assuming that individuals are fixed social structures.

In this respect, Kabbara identifies one major problem with the consociational argument as 'its limit and reductionist understanding of the process of formation and construction of social identities, its attempt to fix social differences, and the methods used to implement this' (Kabbara 1991, 353). In sum, though the consociational device of segmental autonomy is aimed at assisting the model in safeguarding stable consensual politics, it is safe to say that the many drawbacks, among them the risk of separatism (discussed below), are detrimental at the mass level, especially if socio-economic situations worsen and also on the long run.

When it comes to separatism, numerous scholars point out that consociational theory exhibits a static character in an important number of aspects: the theory fails to discern that societies are constantly in a process of transition and modernisation. For instance, Prewitt and Stone point to the static character that elite theory exhibits where 'the basic challenge to society is not to reform itself but to keep from disintegrating' (Prewitt and Stone 1973, 22): 'It might be thought that elite theory cannot account for social and political change, and indeed, this criticism has often been voiced' (Prewitt and Stone 1973, 21). It is safe to say that segmental autonomy both retards and exacerbates the modernisation process that divided societies, just like other societies, go through. Without any doubt, and contrary to Lijphart's contention, this restricts the ability of the device to contribute to creating and maintaining a system capable of generating stable democracy. Here, Pinkney appropriately questions whether liberal democracy is 'something to be valued... because it provides a relatively peaceful means of responding to changing pressures and ideas in society' (Pinkney 1993, 17).

Finally, this section will address whether the consociational device of segmental autonomy fosters tolerance (the attitude) and toleration (the practice) among ethnic groups, a somewhat essential requirement for it to contribute in generating stable democracy. Walzer puts forward the notion that 'tolerance today more than ever is not only a philosophical notion but also a political principle' (Kareh 1999, 126).²⁰ He argues that 'in practice...the nation-state is now the more likely regime of toleration' (Walzer 1997, 24) because 'toleration in nation-states is commonly focused not on groups but on their individual participants who are generally conceived stereotypically first as citizens then as members of this or that minority' (Walzer 1997, 25). Walzer has more faith in toleration for nation-states rather than consociations. He argues that with its focus on groups rather

²⁰ Translated from French.

on individuals, consociational theory does not promote toleration and tolerance between all segments of society and their constituents:

It is the fear of disturbance that breaks up consociations [such as] Social or demographic change.... Suddenly, one of the parties looks dangerous to all the others. Mutual toleration depends on trust not so much in each other's good will as in the institutional arrangements that guard against the effects of ill will. The resulting insecurity makes toleration impossible. What is the danger that I fear? That the consociation will be turned into an ordinary nation-state where I will be a member of the minority looking to be tolerated by my former associates who no longer require my toleration... (Walzer 1997, 24).

However, while Walzer's argument suggests that the consociational model, at the level of communal interaction does not encourage toleration and tolerance, he also writes that 'individual members of the different communities need not accommodate each other except when they meet and bargain in the marketplace. In fact, consociation is probably easiest when the communities don't have much to do with one another, when each of them is relatively self-sufficient and inwardly turned' (Walzer 1997, 54). This points to a contradictory standpoint on the issue of tolerance and toleration and brings to mind the critical arguments that the previous discussion undertook in regard to Etzioni's conflictual standpoint. Indeed, it is not readily apparent how both notions can be fostered within a plural society if Walzer advocates minimal subcultural contact. In short, it is safe to say that the consociational model in the respect of the consociational device of segmental autonomy does not appear to be able to generate democratic stability for plural society.

Hence, it can be said that the consociational device of segmental autonomy does not help to foster tolerance and toleration among the segments of a divided society. Rather, it helps cultivate a feeling of suspicion and hostility between individuals and increased dependence on the elites as a basis for the advancement of the group and its members. Therefore, it is problematic to argue (like consociationalists do) that it contributes in creating and maintaining a system able to generate democratic stability as the internal logic of consociationalism' view of segmental autonomy was put into question and its operability was shown to indicate a permanent fragmentation of society, where there seems to be no sense of a national element in the nature of society. This puts into question its ability to generate democratic stability. Having dealt with the two primary principles of consociational democracy and their relations to democratic theory, the discussion will now move to an examination of the secondary principles of the model (proportionality and mutual veto) and determine their relations to democratic theory.

D. Proportionality

Consociationalists argue that the complex social fabric of divided societies makes it difficult to prescribe majoritarian models of democracy in the context of divided societies and that counteractive mechanisms are needed in order to maintain a system of stability. This section will explain the third consociational device, proportionality, designed to operate as a stabilising mechanism. It will look at the procedural forms that proportionality takes and critically examine its appropriateness for plural (heterogeneous and unstable) societies. Proportionality is considered as 'the basic standard of political representation, civil service appointments and allocation of public funds' (Lijphart 1995b, 278). As devised by Lijphart, its objective is to guarantee the fair representation of minority segments: 'there are two extensions of the proportional rule that entail even greater minority protection: the over-representation of small segments and parity of representation (when the minority or minorities are over-represented to such an extent that they reach a level of equality with the majority or largest group)' (Lijphart 1995b, 278). This may be referred to as qualified proportional rule rather than proportional representation. More specifically, 'proportional results in elections may be achieved by the various systems of formal proportional representation (PR) or by several non-PR methods' (Lijphart 1995b, 279).²¹ As with all three consociational principles, this fourth principle aims to counteract the inherent dangers in divided societies by reducing the risks of the outbreak of communal conflict. This is achieved through a (theoretically) just distribution of political power and public office representation among the different ethnic groups of the divided society, as well as a just distribution of the economic resources available to the state. Hence, the underlying assumption is that the risk of instability will decrease. However, looking at the procedural aspects of this three-fold consociational principle, (i.e., the three-dimensional elements of political representation, civil service appointment and allocation of public funds in operation), this contention needs to be critically evaluated.

1. Political representation

It is important to note here that there is a wide scholarly consensus as to the inappropriateness of majoritarian models of democracy for divided societies. For consociationalists, group exclusion in terms of political representation (in divided societies) within the state apparatus is not desirable. Lijphart refers to the dangers of majoritarianism writing that 'majority-control democracy spells majority dictatorship instead of genuine democracy' (Lijphart 1985, 102): 'this meaning of democracy is violated if significant minorities are excluded from the decision-making process for

²¹ As an example, Lijphart mentions 'Lebanon's method of requiring ethnically balanced slates in multi-member district plurality elections' (Lijphart 1995b, 279). The institutional form of proportionality will be examined in later chapters.

extended periods of time' (Lijphart 1997a, 144). Again, the use of the notion "significant minorities" is problematic. Indeed, it may be said that there is a tension between the words, "significant" and "minorities" and brings the discussion to who is a significant minority and what criteria determine a significant minority. As this debate has been addressed in previous sections, the discussion will move forward. In connection with the argument about the inappropriateness of majoritarianism in divided societies, Nordlinger writes that orthodox democratic theory, which presupposes alternating or shifting majorities, is readily not applicable to divided societies (Nordlinger 1972, 34-5). Similarly, commenting on the impact of majoritarianism on divided societies, Sisk emphasises that 'the scholarly consensus recognizes the principle's limitations in multiethnic societies' (Sisk 1996). Of greatest significance is Sisk's illustration of the inadequacy of the concept of majority rule for heterogeneous and unstable societies. He writes:

Scholars of comparative politics tend to agree that simple forms of majoritarian government contain special problems for multiethnic societies. Minorities in particular in such societies do not equate democracy with freedom or participation, but with the structured dominance of adversarial majority groups... For minority groups, losing an election is not simply a matter of losing office, but of losing the means for protecting the survival of the group... Advocates of power sharing in divided societies agree on the dangers of majoritarianism... Without an assurance that the electoral system will not lead to permanent exclusion, why should a minority group that perceives a threatening environment be willing to accept the inherent risks of electoral competition? (Sisk 1996).

Numerous scholars on consensus and power-sharing forms of rule share this view.²² While this thesis subscribes to such an approach (i.e., the inadequacy of majoritarian models of democracy for divided societies), procedural aspects of the twin concepts of political representation and civil service appointment reveal that the implementation of the consociational principle of proportionality, irrespective of the various forms it may take (parity and the like), is not in and of itself an indicator that prospects for democratic stability will be furthered and that prospects for communal outbreak will be reduced. It is argued in this thesis that adequate, fair, just or qualified proportional political representation within the state apparatus and civil service does not automatically translate into adequate, fair, just or qualified political representation of the various communal groupings. Indeed, even if political representation within the state apparatus (the various state bodies such as parliaments, consultative parliamentary committees, ministries' employees, and all other governmental agencies) and the civil service is distributed among the various communities in a fair and adequate way, the degree of power and influence that each representative enjoys tells a different story. For instance, looking at parliaments, it may be said that though the interests of

²² For researchers who argue in similar vein to Lijphart, Sisk and Nordlinger, see Hans Keman, 'Political stability in divided societies- a rational-institutional explanation'. *Australian Journal of Political Science* (July), Vol.34, No.2, p.257, 1999; Akintola Olarewaju Falaiye, *Consociationalism and the Nigerian political system, 1960-1988 [volumes I and II]*. Doctoral Thesis. USA: University of Kansas, pp.68-69, 1990 and Michael Hudson, 'The problem of authoritative power in Lebanese politics: why consociationalism failed'. In Nadim Shehadi and Dana Haffar Mills, eds. *Lebanon: a history of conflict and consensus*, pp.224-39. London: CLS with I.B. Tauris & Co, p.233, 1988.

peasants, unskilled and semi-skilled workers may be represented, they are represented in a way that is different from the way the interests of the business class are represented. A person who is in the business class may only have the same single vote as a peasant, but he/she will have considerably more influence on the issues under consideration in this section, politically salient issues. Thus, adequate political representation among the various communal groupings in the state apparatus does not necessarily translate into adequate protection and representation of the rights of these various groupings. Though in a consociational democracy, there is guaranteed representation in the political system of communal groupings, questions that arise are: What is being guaranteed in the process and to whom is it being guaranteed? Within each communal group, how are individual rights dealt with? Among the groups, are not individual rights dealt with differently depending on each grouping's socio-economic status? Does this perpetuate divisions within societies? Is not the representation of socio-economic groups a better way of organising a plural society?

For instance, in a study concerning the claim that PR systems (deriving from Lijphart's theory) are more effective at engendering support for political system among ethnic minorities, Norris points out that 'consociational theory makes strong claims for the virtues of PR in plural societies' as her study 'finds no evidence for the proposition that PR party list systems are directly associated with higher levels of support for the political system among ethnic minorities': 'There is little direct evidence about the impact of electoral systems on cultural attitudes, such as satisfaction with democracy and support for the political system' (Norris 1999).²³

Finally, it is important to return to the notions of pre-determination and self-determination, as introduced in the previous section.²⁴ Lijphart observes that 'in systems of pre-determination, there is a strong tendency to rigidly fix shares of representation on a permanent basis.'²⁵ He argues that 'in contrast, self-determination can be entirely non-discriminatory, neutral, and flexible' (Lijphart 2000b): 'It is naturally and continually self-adjusting' (Lijphart 1995b, 285). The notion of self-determination touches on all four consociational principles. In the case of proportionality, it is seen as an attempt to allow for smooth adjustments. This comes as a response to immobilism, which may result from demographic or other changes in the divided society. As such, Lijphart's notion of self-determination is seen as an attempt to strengthen consociational institutions, with the purpose of enhancing prospects for peaceful communal coexistence, by allowing minority groups to define

²³ For details of Norris' study, see Pippa Norris, 'Ballots not bullets: testing consociational theories of ethnic conflict, electoral systems and democratization'. Paper prepared for the International Conference on Institutional Design, Conflict Management and Democracy in the Late Twentieth Century, Kellogg Institute, University of Notre Dame, 9-11 December 1999.

²⁴ See section C.3. in this chapter.

²⁵ He gives the example of 'the [arbitrary] 6:5 Christian-Muslim ratio in pre-war Lebanon' (Lijphart 2000b).

themselves on ethnic/communal terms, or on the basis of non-ethnic, secular and more fluid identities

However, as argued above, the concept of self-determination is at odds with the widely accepted observation (from consociationalists and its critics alike) that the chances of success of consociationalism increase with the presence of a relatively small number of segments, ideally between three and five (as advocated by Lijphart). Likewise, its chances of breakdown increase with the presence of a relatively larger number of segments. Indeed, as Lijphart argues, the process of self-determination 'is to set up a system in which the segments are allowed, and even encouraged to emerge spontaneously- and hence to define themselves instead of being pre-defined' (Lijphart 1995b, 280). This self-determination process, indeed, encourages more groups to define themselves in terms of fluid, as well as ethnic identities. While advocating the emergence of newly defined groups to share power on non-ethnic terms appears salutary for the operability of the model, this thesis argues that unless this is simultaneously accompanied by a process of dismantlement of groupings based on communal identities, the applicability of the model is still further hindered. Indeed, this thesis argues that Lijphart's introduction of the principle of self-determination is a significant, and interesting elaboration of the consociational model, as it implicitly recognises and admits that the politicisation of communal identity has a detrimental impact on the stability of the plural society. As such, it is seen as a clear and salutary move away from Lijphart's view that ethnic identity pervades an individual's life, a contention rejected in this thesis. Hence, if accompanied by the dismantlement of ethnically-based groupings, such an elaboration of the model is welcome at a theoretical level. However, it remains to be seen how such a process of self-determination will unfold in procedural terms.

The discussion in the above paragraphs points to two important distinctions. First, the arguments presented emphasised the inadequacy of the majoritarian model of democracy for divided societies. However, they also suggested that adequate proportional political representation does not translate into adequate protection and preservation of the political rights of the various groupings. Rather, the procedural aspects reveal that the unequal power and influence of the various representatives is a better indicator of how real representation and preservation of rights takes place. Thus, the consociational principle of proportionality in terms of political representation does not seem to guarantee the ability of the model to generate democratic stability. Second, the debate concerning the system of pre-determination as opposed to self-determination, suggests that the application of the latter might hinder consociational "peace" (though this remains to be seen). Since this section has pointed to the important role that power and influence play in determining the preservation of

political rights of the various groups, the following discussion will focus on the second twin of proportionality, the allocation of public funds.

2. Allocation of public funds

As mentioned earlier, the principle of proportionality is three-dimensional, in that it touches upon the distribution of political power and civil service appointments as well as economic power within the state. Again, the underlying assumption advanced by consociationalists is that the danger of the outbreak of communal violence will be reduced if all segments of the divided society are equally accommodated within state institutions, fairly represented within the state apparatus, and enjoy equal economic rights in the distribution of funds available to the state. This conception takes on an unprecedented importance and significance for two reasons. First, it can be said that a just distribution of material benefits (through the principle of proportional equality) among segments of the divided society (usually a developing country) contributes more or less to the stability of the system, without however necessarily increasing the prospects for peaceful communal coexistence. At worst, it reduces the danger of the outbreak of hostilities. Second, it is safe to say that the alternatives are less attractive, a contention examined below.

The notion of economic freedom advanced by advocates of liberal democracy has been subject to criticism from different scholars, mainly Marxists. Marxist theory contends that the liberal notion of economic freedom is inconsistent with the principle of equality, a cornerstone of liberal democratic theory. For instance, Pinkney notes: 'A frequent criticism of liberal democracy is that it merely allows political competition between nominally equal citizens without taking into account the unequal resources that citizens possess' (Pinkney 1993, 10-1). Indeed, Marx, alongside other scholars, notes that resources should not be considered to be a criterion for the definition of democracy, since the world's distribution of resources is unequal (North/South, West/East). As a result, this makes the representation of the public biased. According to the Marxist view, the democratic ideal of equal consideration is violated. Moreover, Marxists, neomarxists and other liberal political theorists argue that modern capitalism, with the domination of the large corporation, produces a 'defective and impaired form of democracy'. Lindbolm, for instance, views the capitalism-democracy relationship in pessimistic terms: 'The large private corporation fits oddly into democratic theory; indeed it does not fit' (Almond 1995, 260). Similarly, Weber argues that 'the advance of bureaucratic organisation was an inevitable component of the growth of capitalism and had undermined the efficacy of the liberal democratic model' (Evans 1995, 232).

For divided societies, most of which are developing third world countries, the interaction of ethnic identity with economic inequality (class cleavages) is bound to significantly increase the risks of the outbreak of social violence. This puts a strain on consociational “peace”, and as such, is neither necessary nor desirable. Against this background, the consociational principle of proportionality is seen as a safer option. Whereas Pinkney argues that ‘in rejecting crude majoritarianism, consociationalism may go to the other extreme of giving minority groups influence and enabling them to retain resources disproportionate to their size’ (Pinkney 1993, 12-3), consociationalists are quick to point out here that the requirements of social peace and order must be given greater priority than the issue of minority over-representation, since they form an attempt to prevent the outbreak of hostilities, which might lead to the breakdown of consociational “peace”. However, the procedural aspects of the state’s allocation of public funds paint a different picture, to which the discussion will now turn.

3. Socio-economic constraints

As indicated in the section dealing with political representation, procedural aspects of consociationalism suggest that power and influence hold greater explanatory power in determining how group socio-economic rights are dealt with. It should be noted that representatives of the communal groups within consociational democracies often act as an elite cartel bound by the mutual interests and benefits they derive from their interaction with each other. While in stable societies which adopt power-sharing arrangements there are ample resources to cater for the socio-economic needs of the various groupings, this is not the case in developing societies torn by socio-economic inequalities. Rather, the competition over the scant material resources available to the state often results in the elites failing to cater for the needs of their followers. As such, the politicisation of communal identity and the development of a clientelistic dependent relationship between communal representatives and their followers are common manifestations. However, socio-economic inequalities remain. While they cut markedly across communal cleavages, elites’ politicisation of communal consciousness and the scarcity of material benefits result in the lower ranks of each communal group often perceiving themselves as more deprived than other communal groups. Hence, the interaction of both forces (communal and class consciousness) in play in plural societies leads to significant societal unrest. For instance, Obler, Steiner and Dierickx argue that ‘advocates of the consociational theory not only exaggerate the part played by elites in resolving conflicts, they also neglect the importance of relative deprivation as a source of subcultural hostility. The degree to which scarce resources are, *or are perceived to be*,²⁶ allocated inequitably

²⁶ Emphasis added.

among subcultures may be more significant than the degree of elite accommodation in explaining variations in the level of hostilities' (Obler, Steiner & Dierickx 1977, 41).

This scenario suggests that mass resignation to such a situation should not translate into societal peace. Rather, societal unrest is latent, and bound to manifest itself in very different ways (such as impasses and immobilism at the decision-making level due to conflicts over the allocation of scarce development projects) should the economic situation worsen. Finally, it should be noted that the consociational principle of allocating equal economic funds to the different groupings may impede the efforts that Lebanon is making to integrate its economy into the world economy and join competitively in the globalisation process. Indeed, such significant global changes in the world today in the nature of the flows of both capital and labour fail to take account of communal sensitivities. Rather, the principle of equally preserving the economic rights of the various communal groupings appears to impede and hinders the dynamic globalisation process. Hence, the secular nets of globalisation²⁷ do not take into account the complex needs of plural societies. Having discussed procedural aspects of the three-dimensional principle of proportionality in divided societies, the discussion will now address the last consociational component, that of mutual veto. Combined with the other three consociational principles, mutual veto is seen mainly as an attempt to preserve minority rights through constitutional provisions. The following section will critically investigate this contention.

E. Mutual veto

The fourth consociational component is mutual, or minority veto. It is designed to guarantee 'to each segment that it will not be outvoted by the majority when its vital interests are at stake' (Lijphart 1986, 35). The importance of the mutual veto manifests itself when vital interests of a minority are at stake rather than when issues of general interest are concerned. In the former case, 'the veto provides essential protection' (Lijphart 1995b, 278). Lijphart notes that mutual veto 'is usually based on informal understandings rather than formal legal or constitutional rules' (Lijphart 1995a, 857). Here, it is important to point out that while in the Westminster model, minority rights are protected by constitutional rights, the latter can be altered by legislature, contrary to the consociational model where minority rights are formally institutionalised in the system. In Lijphart's words, 'the minority veto on constitutional or other vital matters contrasts sharply with the unwritten constitution in the Westminster model of democracy, which gives the majority the right to change even the most fundamental rules of government, limited only by morality and

²⁷ To borrow Georges Corm's term.

common sense' (Lijphart 1995a, 857-8). Briefly, the underlying assumption is that the rights of minorities are preserved by the constitution, thereby reducing the risk of minority resentment or frustration and instability. Crucial to the maintenance of a stable system is the guarantee that the rules of the political game cannot be changed in a way that discriminates against minority groups. This points to the importance of constitutionalism in divided societies.

1. Constitutionalism

Particularly for divided societies, the notion of constitutionalism takes unprecedented significance since it is a device that ensures the protection of minority rights. For instance, Leca observes that 'if there is no constitutional guarantee for the minority, "the real world implication" as Giovanni Sartori puts it, "is that a part of the people becomes a non-people, an excluded part", which mutilates the population and thus destroys the very basis of democracy' (Sartori in Leca 1996, 58). With reference to this matter, Reinkowski, quoting Dahrendorf, argues similarly: 'The heterogeneous nation-state as a civic nation *must* create constitutional and democratic institutions if it wants to live in peace whereas the homogeneous nation-state *can* do it' (Reinkowski 1997, 493).

However, although the principle of the minority veto is protected by constitutional rights and formally institutionalised in the system, it should be pointed out that informal elite agreements, mostly conducted by very few "significant" actors, can alter constitutional provisions and therefore, the rights of minorities. For divided societies, this can have a significant impact on the stability of the system. Notably here, it is crucial for this discussion to focus on the destabilising nature of such pacts. The discussion below will reveal the ideological content of constitutions, which limits the kind of legislation that can be enacted, because of the underlying established rules of the political game under which such legislations are enacted.

2. Pacting

It is important for this section to address the notion of political pacts and their impact on system stability since they touch on all four consociational principles. For instance, O'Leary points out that 'a consociation can be created without any explicit consociational theory to guide it- indeed that has often happened. More often consociations are the outcomes of bargains or pacts between the political leaders of ethnic or religious leaders. This agreement is the product of tacit and explicit consociational thought, and of bargaining, or of what is sometimes called "pacting" ' (O'Leary 1998). In similar vein, Lijphart observes that 'there is also the general difference, applicable to all four consociational principles, between laying down the basic rules of power-sharing in formal

documents- such as constitutions, laws or semi-public agreements- and relying on merely informal and unwritten agreements and understandings among the leaders of the segments' (Lijphart 1995b, 279). In this respect, Lijphart raises the following question: Should consociational rules be laid down in formal documents or rely on merely informal and unwritten agreements and understandings among the leaders of the main groups? He argues that 'informal rules generally work better because they are more flexible- but perhaps also because they reflect a higher level of trust among groups and group leaders. When sufficient mutual trust is lacking and inter-group relations are highly contentious, there is probably no alternative to formal constitutional and legal rules to govern power sharing and autonomy in deeply divided societies' (Lijphart 2000b).

Lijphart's arguments indicate the necessity of the present discussion to address the notion of political pacts. The discussion will begin with a definition of political pacts. In connection with this, O'Donnell's writes that a political pact is 'an explicit but not always publicly explicated or justified agreement among a select set of actors which seeks to define (or better to redefine) rules governing the exercise of power on the basis of mutual guarantees for the "vital interests" of those entering it. At the core of a pact lies a negotiated compromise under which actors agree to forgo or underutilize their capacity to harm each others' corporate autonomies or vital interests' (Leca 1996, 49).

Particularly noteworthy here is the detrimental impact of such pacts on the stability of divided societies, since it often happens that the success of such informal agreements depends solely on elite compromise. Therefore, the number of actors included is mostly limited to the representatives of the major or most powerful segments (such as their demographic strength or politico-economic power) of the divided society. This situation often leads to resentment and frustration within the less powerful ethnic groups. In this respect, Lind points to an important distinction, arguing that 'in some cases the deviations may be unjustifiable. In other cases, though, the concessions may be reasonable and legitimate- particularly if the alternative to an idiosyncratic constitution is not a simpler, more majoritarian constitution, but secession or other kinds of civil strife' (Lind 1999). Similarly, Salamé refers to the importance of 'informal pacts' in their 'common use as a means to avoid civil wars or institutional chaos' (Salamé 1996a, 3).

Accordingly, the conditions leading to such pacts sometimes occur when the security of different segments is threatened. Dahl for instance refers to political pacts in extremely pluralistic societies as 'a set of understandings or engagements not always codified into formal constitutional provisions, that provide a relatively high degree of security to the various subcultures' (Dahl 1971, 118). Therefore, under such conditions, it is safe to say that the need for security, which often leads to pacts, is the lowest (minimal) common denominator that the representatives of the society share.

The necessity of reaching a solution through compromise takes unprecedented importance. However, this can lead to resentment and frustration on the part of followers. For instance, Gill points out that 'this is a major problem for pacts and those who design them: agreement may result in widespread opposition, alienation and disillusionment among the followers' (Gill 2000, 55).

3. Legislative constraints

Thus, it is safe to say that while minority rights are preserved through constitutional provisions, it is often the case that the few actors involved in such pacts alter such constitutional provisions in an attempt to reach a compromise, thereby violating minority rights. This results in frustration and resentment on the part of the masses, and is therefore detrimental to consociationalism, which relies on elite/followers vertical communication for its success. Hence, this reduces the prospects for consociational stability. Additionally, looking at the procedural dimensions of such informal pacts, it often appears that they have to deal with a shared set of interests through which communal representatives are willing to interrelate, thus putting in danger societal peace. For instance, O'Donnell and Schmitter observe that 'there is a paradox about pacts: they move towards democracy by undemocratic means. They are negotiated by a few actors, they reduce competitiveness and accountability, and they attempt to structure the agenda of policy concerns and they distort the principle of citizen equality' (Gill 2000, 53).

Thus, though the principle of mutual or minority veto is designed to protect vital interests, the discussion of pacting reveals that pacts often have to deal with the vital interests of the most powerful elites, and regulate the rules of the political game between them, thereby increasing resentment at the mass level. Against this background, the widening of the scope of the grand coalition to include representatives of all the groups of the plural society appears to be one way of constructing a political arrangement, in which, even though it may be in a limited way, minority groups of the plural society can contribute to the decision-making process, and at the same time, retain a decent degree of protection.

F. Recapitulation

The various discussions in this chapter suggest that the consociational model, in terms of its four devices, does not necessarily generate democratic stability. The discussion of the procedural aspects of consociational rule casts doubt on the ability of the model to promote the creation and maintenance of a system capable of generating democratic stability. However, for the purposes of this thesis, the present discussion would be incomplete if it did not closely examine the remaining

procedural shortcomings of the consociational model in generating democratic stability for the divided societies it is designed to operate in. This section will briefly present the remaining limitations of the model in this respect. It will also discuss the relevance of the alternative approach proposed by Horowitz, namely his notion of integrative democracy, as the discussion in later chapters will address it in the Lebanese context. Finally, the discussion will set the agenda for the remaining chapters of this thesis.

1. Consociationalism in operation

While this chapter emphasises the undemocratic nature of consociationalism within the pragmatic definition of democracy that this thesis adheres to, this section will point to the consequences this has on the stability of the system. For instance, Halpern makes the point that 'Lijphart admittedly subscribes to the school of democratic thought that emphasizes stability over democracy' (Halpern 1984, 119). However, the following discussion will show that even if democratic institutions are 'modified to promote stable outcomes', the model is still incapable in many instances of promoting stability.

a. Immobilism

One of the strongest criticisms to which consociational theory is subjected is the deadlock and immobilisation in decision-making that might manifest itself at the elite level due to the theory's elitist nature, and hence, due to the elites' unwillingness to compromise even if this puts threats on the stability of the system: 'in consensual democracies rules are institutionalized which *force* all relevant political actors to come to compromises or, alternatively, to leave issues *undecided*' (Kaiser 1997, 433).²⁸ Indeed, Kaiser's choice of words is very pertinent here as the procedural aspects of consociationalism reveal that the elites are many instances unwilling to force themselves to cooperate, hence leaving issues frozen at the expense of system stability. This is particularly troubling when it comes to socio-economic issues that generally require fast and effective decision-making free of political considerations. For instance, when it comes to dynamic globalisation opportunities and challenges, the role that political considerations and conflicts of interests play in delaying political accord are particularly problematic. Numerous scholars have pointed to the deadlock that frequently manifests itself under consociational structures of rule, and the ensuing political and societal instability.²⁹ Yagcioglu pertinently observes that 'if the elites are not willing to

²⁸ Emphasis added.

²⁹ For similar comments see Heather Deegan, The politics of the Middle East and Africa. London: Routledge, p.57, 1996; Arend Lijphart, Democracy in plural societies. London: Yale University Press, pp.53-55, 1977 and Robert

make the system work, consociationalism *breaks down*, leading usually to *violent interethnic conflicts*' (Yagcioglu 1996).³⁰

The drawback that the likelihood of immobilism puts on the ability of consociationalism to generate a stable democracy was recognised by Lijphart. In one of his most recent works, Lijphart refers to this matter and writes: 'When power is broadly shared, the critics argue, it will be difficult or even impossible to make decisions; the result is immobilism, deadlock, and, in the end, *democratic breakdown*' (Lijphart 2000b).³¹ Against these critiques, Lijphart's line of argument runs as follows:

There are also clear cases where power-sharing has worked successfully in ethnically divided countries- Switzerland since 1943, Belgium since 1970, Lebanon from 1943 to 1975, Malaysia from 1955 to 1969, Surinam from 1958 to 1973, and the Netherlands Antilles from 1950 to 1985- as well as in three countries with deep religious-ideological cleavages- Austria from 1945 to 1966, the Netherlands from 1917 to 1967, and Luxembourg during the same period of about half a century. In addition, there are three more countries which I also regard as power-sharing cases but that are more controversial- Colombia from 1958 to 1974, India ever since 1947, and South Africa since 1994. Czecho-Slovakia was a power-sharing democracy from 1989 until its amicable partition in 1993. During 1999, two new power-sharing systems were set up: in Fiji and Northern Ireland (Lijphart 2000b).

Hence, it would be safe to argue that consociational arrangements are 'under serious challenge to liberalize'. From the above, three conclusions can be drawn. First, Lijphart's argument suggests that immobilism in a consociational regime will ultimately manifest itself at some point. Most of the countries that Lijphart refers to (except for Switzerland and India) have adopted consociational practices for relatively short-lived periods before system breakdown. The second conclusion suggests that consociationalism has not stood the test of time and therefore, cannot be considered a viable long-term system able to generate democratic stability (a central issue in this thesis) for divided societies. Whereas the consociational model seems adequate in preventing the outbreak of ethnic conflict for short-lived periods, the many cases of system breakdown suggest that it fails to promote long-term stable democracy. For instance, drawing on some cases of consociational countries, it can be argued that the model (in operation) seems to go through periods of relative communal stability interrupted by cyclical crises (a matter discussed further below) and that it is often seen as the only resort when compared with less human and economically feasible solutions, such as ethnic cleansing and partition. Third, it may be said that broadening the representation scope of the grand coalition is one way of counter-attacking deadlock.

Contrary to the assumption that broadly shared power will result in deadlock, it is argued here that it is the fierce competition among the "significant" group representatives which effectively enables

Pinkney, *Democracy in the Third world* [Issues in Third World politics]. Buckingham: Open University Press, p.12, 1993.

³⁰ Emphasis added.

them, because of their power and influence and because they are the only constituents of that coalition (extremely elitist character), to refuse to compromise, hence the resulting deadlock. The absence of other minority groups enables them to carry out executive decision-making in such an extremely elitist way. Thus, broadening the grand coalition is one way of encouraging the formation of intra-coalition alliances among the group representatives. This restrains the fierce competition between the significant groups, allows minority groups to use the veto power, and allows for effective decision-making, hence avoiding deadlock.

b. External threats

Another factor that seems to contribute considerably to societal unrest is one of the background conditions that Lijphart identifies as a favourable factor for the creation and maintenance of consociational democracy. According to Lijphart, 'external threats have a unifying effect only when they are perceived as a common danger by all segments' (Lijphart in Bogaards, 1998, 479), and 'are conducive to democracy', with the distinction that 'it is not meant to imply that external threat causes integration within a nation' (Farah 1975, 19). This contention can be seen as problematic in a number of respects. It is not readily apparent how a system of rule that fragments the communal groupings, and hence society, and politicises ethnic identity will unify the country.

First, in divided societies, segments and their members adhere to different belief systems, sometimes involving the existence of incompatible perceptions relating to sensitive matters such as religion, culture, race, tradition, etc and hence, what constitutes an external threat is often 'a function of sectarian affiliation' (Abukhalil 1988, 281). In other words, perceptions of political threats and socio-cultural issues depend to a large extent on ethnic belonging, and thus, this puts strains on the stability of the system. Closely related to this subject matter is the fact that ethnic groups enjoy a high degree of subcultural autonomy in running their multiple ideological instruments, and this leads to the emergence of distinct, separate value systems. Third, consociationalism encourages a minimal contact between the subcultures thereby widening the gap between the different groups and increasing the potential for disagreement as to what a foreign threat is. Therefore, it is expected that the likelihood of agreement as to what constitutes a foreign threat will be greatly reduced.³² Hence, this challenges the assumption made by Lijphart and other consociationalists concerning one of the favourable factors of consociational democracy: 'foreign threats that are perceived as a common danger enhance the chances of success for consociations'. Under the consociational framework that fosters ideological, territorial and national separatism, it is

³¹ Emphasis added.

³² As the Lebanese case suggests (an issue discussed in later chapters).

likely that the perception of foreign threats to the system will vary among the different ethnic groups of the divided society. This hinders the model's ability to generate democratic stability, a central issue with which this thesis is concerned.

c. Stability

Stability in divided societies is difficult to achieve and communal peace can be disrupted in a number of ways. First, the extremely elitist nature of consociationalism and the flawed assumption that the elite will/can cooperate undermine the risk that popular resentment can put on the stability of the system. It is problematic to argue that high (or increased) levels of vertical communication (leaders/followers) in which the elite dominates will adequately prevent the risk of the outbreak of ethnic conflict. Whereas the elitist picture suggests that atomised individuals are driven by leaders, popular dissatisfaction as a result of high levels of inter- and intra-elite compromise can easily disrupt the consociational peace as socio-economic interests are ignored. This is especially true because the model advocates low levels of mass commitment to the preservation of society (what Lijphart calls moderate nationalism), as opposed to widely accepted strong notions of nationalism and nation-building. In this respect, Sisk argues that 'consociationalism overestimates deference by communal groups to their leaders and underestimates the power and role of popular dissatisfaction with intergroup compromise' (Sisk 1996). Indeed, as argued previously, informal pacts are a frequent manifestation of consociationalism, and place limitations on the kind of legislations that can be discussed. A situation in which popular resentment can disturb communal peace can emerge for instance as a response to elite 'uncodified agreements' or informal pacts (a feature of consociationalism discussed above).

Second, though the four consociational principles act to a large extent as counteractive devices, they also carry limitations that may disrupt communal peace. For instance, Sitnikov summarises the reasons that endanger the stability of consociational democracies. He writes that 'the greatest criticism concerns the failure of consociational democracy to bring about and maintain political stability: first, government by a grand coalition is slow-paced process. Second, mutual veto involves the further dangers of complications in decision-making. Third, proportionality is achieved often at the expense of administrative efficiency. Fourth, segmental autonomy is expensive' (Sitnikov 1997).

Third, whereas Sisk offers a comprehensive account of the dangers of instability, Sousa focuses on the inability of the elite to prevent the outbreak of conflict and sometimes the breakdown of consociational politics. She argues that 'the central problem of this theory is therefore how to

maintain stability in the permanent tension of elites' interests. The leaders are always trying to conciliate the preservation of the system with the interests of the groups they represent' (Sousa 2001). In that respect, Lijphart's contention that 'politicians can change the course of a country if they so desire' seems problematic. Even if the "enlightened" elite realise that the societies in which they live are prone to destabilisation and that caution must be exerted at the elite level to preserve stability, the outbreak of elite fighting (frequently as a result of economic and private conflicts of interests) is always possible, hence disturbing the "democratic peace". With regard to this, it should be pointed out that consociationalism has not stood the test of time. For instance, Lijphart notes that consociationalism's 'chief problem is not its "undemocratic nature" but its "potential failure to bring about and maintain political stability"' (Deegan 1993, 13) therefore bringing an element of uncertainty to the model and its democratic assumptions without however undermining the importance of the theory. Perhaps Seaver's conclusion best illustrates the relation between the consociational model and stable democracy. She writes: 'Political scientists have emphasised that power-sharing devices have not consistently yielded peace and stable democracy, and that the connection between consociational democracy and stability has not been sufficiently demonstrated' (Seaver 2000, 252).

d. Cyclical crises

Lastly, critics argue that consociationalism goes through periods of relative stability interrupted by crises. Indeed, the various discussions in this thesis suggest the inability of the consociational model of rule to deal with the long-term problems of the polity. As a political system, consociationalism is prone to collapse. For instance, Rabushka and Shepsle argue that 'consociational stability is only temporary and such democracies may develop instability sooner or later' (Chahine 1998, 60). According to them, 'consociationalism would automatically turn to authoritarian rule or outright civil war' (Chahine 1998, 164). Indeed, it should be said that consociational solutions are often chosen because of a lack of other alternatives and they are often reverted to, despite the failure of previous consociational experiments within countries. In short, it may be argued from the above that the consociational model in terms of the four components of the theory has numerous limitations and shortcomings as far as creating and maintaining a system capable of generating democratic stability is concerned.

2. Plural-elitism- the integrative approach

The scholarly debate concerning the applicability and operability of the model of consociational democracy has contributed to the development of the "inclusive or integrative model of

democracy". For the purposes of the present chapter, a discussion of the concept of integrative democracy proposed by Horowitz is important, since the model is a power-sharing mechanism (for divided societies) based on consensus. Additionally and more importantly, Horowitz's concept of integrative democracy is a fair account of an alternative approach to the rule of plural societies, notably for the concerns of this thesis, Lebanon. The gradual deconfessionalisation of politics, suggested by Horowitz's concept, seems particularly relevant for Lebanese society. Additionally, Horowitz's concept fits well with Lijphart's recently developed notion of self-determination, which has received substantial attention in this thesis and will be discussed when relating to the Lebanese context in later chapters.

However, Horowitz's approach differs from the consociational model in some respects that will be discussed below, (after presenting the points of similarity that both models share). As with the consociational model, the integrative approach is elitist in nature, with the elite playing a dominant role, not only in ruling society, but also in fostering a compromise between the various segments (political engineering). More importantly, as Sisk points out, what unites both consociational and integrative approaches 'is the belief in coalescent democracy as an alternative to the adverse effects of majoritarianism and the assumptions that support a rejection of majoritarian practices. "Coalescent" decision making is argued to be a better prescription for the ills that plague deeply divided societies than the adversarial pattern associated with majoritarian democracy' (Sisk 1996).

As distinct from the consociational model, the integrative power-sharing approach 'seeks to deal with ethnic conflict potential through fostering political arrangements that will lead to *bridging or transcending ethnic group differences*' (Grofman and Stockwell 2001).³³ Hence, while the objective continues to be the ability to reach compromise between the various ethnic groups, this is seen as best achieved if the political arrangements do not foster separatism and an inward-oriented outlook for communities, as prescribed by consociationalism. Indeed, the integrative approach attempts to integrate groups within the system rather than institutionalise separatism, as in the consociational model, which 'merely re-enforces the isolation of one societal block from another' (United Nations Development Programme [hereafter UNDP] 1999). In addition, the integrative approach relies on moderate politics as opposed to extremist political activity within the consociational framework. Both the notions of integration and moderation will be discussed here.

Lijphart's consociational approach differs from that of Horowitz who 'argues that political institutions should encourage or induce integration across communal divides' (Sisk 1996). For

³³ Emphasis added.

instance, Sisk, one of the major researchers on the integrative approach, presents the point that 'ethnic conflicts will be easier to manage if the participants perceive their differences to be socially constructed, rather than innate and immutable. Conflicts will be less severe when there is some social, cultural or economic overlap between the groups' (Glaser 1998). This is seen as a clear deviation from the assumptions of consociationalists who, like primordialists (culturalistic approaches) argue that ethnicity is 'an inherited characteristic and if not permanently fixed, at least very difficult to change' (Lijphart 1995a, 855), a contention rejected in the present thesis. Sisk subscribes to the constructivists' view (economistic approaches) that sees ethnic identity as "made", a contention also rejected in this thesis. Indeed, it was pointed out that ethnic identity exists, is more than transitional but can be manipulated. Thus, the integrative notion allows for the emergence and effective channelling of a genuine and spontaneous fluid class and cultural consciousness that may counterattack the disintegrative forces of the politicisation of ethnic identity, which some elites will undoubtedly practise. However, it would be simplistic to assume that elites always attempt to foster the transcendence of communal identity. Rather, bearing in mind the dominant role of elites in the integrative approach, and if one looks at the procedural aspects of elite rule, it is safe to say that elites may very well attempt to politicise communal identity, especially if the fierce competition for the scarce material resources leads to unrest and resentment at the communal level. The integrative approach, just like the consociational one remains an elite/actor-centered model. In theory however, the assumptions of Horowitz, and consequently the integrative model, seem more capable of fostering integration in divided societies than is the case with the consociational model.

Second, when it comes to moderation in politics, the integrative approach relies on moderate politics: ' "consociational institutions rely on constraints against immoderate politics, such as the mutual or minority veto, as opposed to incentives for moderation" ' (Horowitz 1991, 154-60) that are prescribed by the integrative approach. According to Horowitz, 'for effective democratic governance in a divided society, moderates must be rewarded, extremists sanctioned' (Sisk 1996). Clearly, as Sisk points out, 'this differentiates Horowitz's prescriptions from those of consociationalism' (Sisk 1996). The integrative model, plural-elitist in nature, relies heavily on elite efforts at ' "political engineering" to mitigate conflicts in divided societies' (Sisk 1996). For example, 'the contributions by Polsby and Sartori are examples of such sophisticated pluralist analyses: they adhere to the notion of pluralism, yet assign elites a more central role in a democracy than pluralists were wont to do before' (Etzioni-Halevy 1997, 152). However, while such efforts appear salutary to remedy to the shortcomings of the consociational mode, it is safe to say that a problem of lack of representation will manifest itself if not all segments of the plural society are represented at the elite decision-making level. Indeed, this thesis has previously suggested the elaboration of the model in terms of the notion of the grand coalition by offering to include within

this institutional body all members of the plural society, irrespective of their size. While this thesis pointed out that representation in and by itself is not an indicator of "real and effective" representation, since power and influence appear more explanatory in regulating elite relationships, this thesis argues that it would still be undesirable to exclude extremists from representation. First, this will lead to resentment. Second, precisely because such groups are extremist, the impact that such resentment resulting from group exclusion may have on the stability of the system remains significant. Rather, a more desirable approach would be to allow such groups representation within the system, as this may partly be a way of containing the social unrest resulting from their exclusion. Indeed, as pointed out in previous sections, the process of including groups not based on ethnic-terms should be simultaneously accompanied by a process of dismantling those based on ethnic-terms, and for that matter, the extremist ones as a start. However, the integrative approach does not suggest the process of including non-ethnic-based groups in the decision-making level but only speaks of removing extremist blocs that rely on ethnic politics. Also, the integrative approach speaks of political elite-initiated engineering designed to curb ethnic politics. Thus, looking at the procedural dimensions of elite rule, it was pointed out (above) that it would be simplistic to assume that the elite politicisation of communal identity will not occur. Thus, in this respect, the integrative approach does not seem particularly able to generate democratic stability for plural societies.

Ultimately however, Sisk argues convincingly by striking a middle way between both approaches and attempting to solve the dilemma of having to decide on an appropriate formula for divided societies:

Scholars differ over whether the *consociational* power-sharing approach...leads to better relations among ethnic groups in multiethnic societies than...an *integrative* (or pluralist) approach... Neither approach can be said to be the best in all circumstances. Rather, the two approaches should be seen in contingent terms... The challenge is not to develop a singular model of conflict-regulating practices, but rather a menu of conflict-regulating practices from which policymakers can choose and adapt to the intricacies and challenges of successfully regulating any given ethnic conflict (Sisk 1996).

Indeed, it may be asserted that Sisk's suggestion is pertinent as the present study has already pointed out that resorting to consociationalism is more often than not a result of a lack of better alternatives. In this sense, amalgamating various power-sharing devices depending on the particular contexts and peculiar needs of plural societies may very well be one way of improving the governance of the latter. 'Sartori... admits that a variety is immense. Every single country has to elaborate its own version, has to choose its own way for the establishment of democratic institutions based of their own political culture, heritage of their own statehood, willingness of the society and all major social forces and institutions to contribute to the stability and process of creation'

(Sitnikov 1997). In terms of the Lebanese context, the relevance and applicability of the integrative approach will be discussed in later chapters.

3. Absence of workable alternatives

The various discussions in this chapter raise legitimate questions: What is the utility of the model for plural societies? Why should one prescribe this model as a conflict-regulating mechanism in such divided societal contexts if it fails on the promise of democratic stability (and sometimes stability)? Answers to such questions lie in the observations made by Dahl, Deegan and Baaklini.

While commenting on the prospects of consociationalism in divided societies, Dahl argues that the 'development of the beliefs, skills and incentives among political elites is helped by... the conviction that the alternative to consociationalism is a fearful Hobbesian struggle with disastrous consequences; and traditions within the elite culture favoring conciliation, mutual accommodation and compromise' (Dahl 1989, 258). Similarly, Deegan notes that 'the consociational model even with all its deficiencies may create a climate more conducive to the persistence of a system of democracy, after its demise' (Deegan 1993, 14). Most importantly for this discussion, Baaklini's observation that 'the classical idealized conception of liberal democracy has failed to produce viable and stable democracies in divided societies' (Baaklini 1999, 652) is pertinent. Against this background, but also in the light of the limitations of the consociational model highlighted in this chapter, it may be argued that an elaboration of the consociational model seems a useful tool to meet the peculiar needs of plural societies and enhance the utility of consociational theory.

Additionally, it may be said that such claims are strengthened by the oft-made observation regarding the utopian aspect of liberal democracy. For instance, Bachrach notes that 'viable democratic theory can hardly be built upon a dream that has not the remotest chance of being realized' (Bachrach 1967, 6). Commenting on classical democratic theory, he writes: 'To continue to advocate such a theory in today's world, it is argued, is bound to foster cynicism toward democracy as it becomes evident that the gap between the reality and the ideal can not be closed' (Bachrach 1967, 8). Against this background, despite the many limitations of the consociational model, an elaborated version (i.e., introducing a change in the theory as this chapter attempted) of the latter takes unprecedented importance for divided societies, thus giving credibility to the theory. For instance, Sisk writes that 'while the institutions of consociational decision-making vary, its advocates argue, the principles are rediscovered time and time again as societies seek solutions to the existence of intense ethnic politics and methods to harness ethnicity for constructive purposes'

(Sisk 1996). Therefore, despite all the limitations of consociationalism discussed in this chapter, an elaboration of the model may well improve the intricate governance processes of plural societies.

Chapters 3 pointed out that an elaboration of the theory would be salutary to the successful operation of the model and presented this elaboration, mainly in terms of the broad all-inclusive scope of the grand coalition (to avoid group exclusion). A typical description of such a scenario, the breakdown of the fragile consociational order, as a result of group exclusion from effective decision-making (as well as other factors), can be found through an examination of the first Lebanese experiment with consociationalism (1943-1975). In that sense, this period (examined in Chapter 4) provides a rich field to test the operability of the model and hence, to shed more light on the theory.

Chapter 4 Consociationalism and the pre-war Lebanese political system

In pre-war Lebanon, the various communal groups are unequal in size and power, and this makes Lebanese society complex in nature. Consociationalism purports to be able to work out a democratic system of governance and an orderly peaceful way of managing the coexistence of plural societies, such as Lebanon's, creating and maintaining democratic stability. This chapter examines why the consociational model failed to deliver on this promise in pre-war Lebanon. To this end, the chapter will look at the institutional framework of the Lebanese political system and how the translation of the consociational structure of rule into practice, and the detrimental impact of "consociationalism in action", impacted upon the form of society that pre-war Lebanon manifested, and hence, on the stability of the system. The chapter will determine in what respect the first pre-war Lebanese political system relates to the consociational model of democracy. It will look at the Lebanese experiment with consociationalism in its initial phase, 1943-1975. Indeed, an assessment of the Lebanese experiment with consociationalism in its initial phase is central to the present thesis. First, adopting consociational practices for more than three decades forms the basis on which to evaluate the capacity of the consociational model to act as an efficient mechanism able to generate and maintain democratic stability in a plural society. Second, the breakdown of the consociational system in 1975, with the advent of the Lebanese civil war 1975-1990, questions the capability of the model to act as a conflict-regulation method within plural societies.

The chapter will begin with a concise historical chronology of key events prior to the 1975 war, briefly outlining the pre-war confessional set up and the ways in which its embodiment in a consociational structure of rule impacted on the stability of the system during the pre-1975 period. Then, it will consider the classification of the political system from a theoretical point of view, as based on the 1926 Lebanese Constitution. The discussion will then move to an examination of the 1943 National Pact, which institutionalised consociationalism. Subsequently, the discussion will focus on the procedural manifestations of consociationalism. The chapter will then deal with the constraints that the operation of consociationalism put on the nature of Lebanese society and on the stability of the system. Though the allegedly positive relationship between consociationalism and democratic stability is being addressed throughout the present chapter, the final section of the chapter will focus specifically on this issue by summarising the main reasons why the pre-war consociational model failed to generate democratic stability for Lebanon, and ultimately led to the collapse of the system. Equally, this last section will briefly mention the various stages of the 1975-1990 civil war and indicate why the next chapter will deal with an examination of the post-war Lebanese rule system.

A. Historical chronology

Since independence, Lebanon has been a multi-communal state, with eighteen plural ethnic groups/denominations that can be narrowed down to seven major communities, all of which are minorities in themselves. All are Muslims and Christians, originating mainly from the different civilisations, religions and cultures that settled in the Near East. The Muslim community mainly represented in the confessional system, consists of Sunnis, Shi'is, Druze, Ismā'ilis, Alawites (Winslow 1996, 298) and lately, in mid-2002, Kurds. The Christian community represented in the confessional system comprises Maronites, Greek Catholics, Greek Orthodox, Armenian Orthodox, Roman Catholics, Armenian Catholics, Old Syrians (Jacobites), Syrian Catholics, Chaldean Catholics and Protestants (Winslow 1996, 299). As Khazen points out, 'the number of groups in relation to the size of the population [and the territory for the matter] is relatively high' (Khazen 2000, 32). Hence, Lebanese society takes a vertically segmented character, with most communities providing 'their members with a distinct identity, a network of institutions, mutual-help associations, neighbourhoods and a marriage pool' (Smootha & Hanf 1992, 39).

By looking at the complex historical processes of change during the nineteenth century, it may be said that these complex processes have impacted on the nature and stability of the territory of what became Lebanon in its present borders. Indeed, the modernisation processes underway politically reshaped community relations along religious lines. This was the result of a noteworthy interplay between the traditions of what was to become Lebanon and the Ottoman government, with western imperialism deeply involved in the process and hence producing as a consequence sectarianism, as may be seen today. The Lebanese confessional system evolved considerably from the millet system under the Ottoman Empire, which may have been the origin of the confessional groupings. Ottoman governance structures and practices can be said to have brought about the consociational model in the country. Thus, these practices will be outlined, as no meaningful classification of the pre-war Lebanese political system can be undertaken without locating the discussion in the context of Lebanon's political and social environment and its history. This is because democracy takes many forms that depend upon these particular historical experiences and the social structure of the society in question. Thus, this section will highlight the economic, political, historical and social factors that brought about consociational democracy in Lebanon. As Lehmbruch and Faour note:

The Lebanese system goes back to the Ottoman tradition of autonomy of the religious communities (millets)... (Lehmbruch 1974a, 93). When Lebanon was under Ottoman rule, the "millet system" classified Ottoman subjects according to their religious sect. Muslims and Christians of various confessions became aware of their distinctiveness because it carries with it certain political and social obligations (Faour 1998, 56).

While this vertical communal compartmentalisation should not necessarily translate into communal hostility, the existence of marked horizontal socio-economic differences that cut across communal distinctiveness has brought about a significant degree of societal instability. Indeed, as Chapter 3 explained, Lebanon is divided along socio-economic class cleavages, obscured by the fact that the political and socio-economic struggle for power takes the form of a communal conflict as a result of a process of manipulation and politicisation of communal identity to serve the interests of the foreign players and local ruling class. For instance, Salamé questions whether the struggle of identities in Lebanon is ‘merely tribal, religious, confessional or nationalist’? He argues that ‘Lebanon suffers also from a class struggle so difficult to discern in this unbelievable entanglement of interests and identities’ (Salamé 1986, 11). Indeed, throughout the nineteenth century, Lebanese politics has fluctuated between periods of peace and periodic attempts to change the system so as to have a more equitable distribution of political benefits and positions among the confessional groups. The involvement of the west did little to change this unstable situation, and class divisions persisted to a significant extent.

Against this background, Hanf’s treatment of ethnicity is of crucial relevance for the deeply divided Lebanese society under investigation in this thesis. Indeed, the elites’ manipulation of communal distinctiveness and sectarian identities emerges as an institutionalised structure of rule (through the confessional system in place) as well as a procedural feature of pre-war and post-war Lebanese consociational politics and its impact on the cohesiveness Lebanese society has been of great significance, judging by the permanently fragmented character of the latter.¹ Finally, an additional source of societal separatism and instability stems from regional and international contexts. Lebanon is not only a deeply divided society, but is a very complex one, existing in a region with complex politics. It is an internally unstable insecure environment, existing in an externally unstable insecure environment. Needless to say, both dimensions are inter-linked as external (regional and international) events have direct repercussions on the domestic scene. As Roberson points out, Lebanon is ‘a particularly good example of the complexity of governance, where the diversities and responses are extreme and where the complex interplay of external and domestic forces has a dramatic effect on the dynamics of social and political processes within the country and upon regional and external relations’ (Roberson 1998a, 1). The impact of the plural character of Lebanese society on the stability of the system has been significant, especially when it is acknowledged that the manifestation of a number of socio-economic struggles took the form of a communal sectarian

¹ For more details, see Sami Adeeb Ofeish, Sectarianism and change in Lebanon: 1843-1975 (conflict, elite, national pact). Doctoral Thesis. USA: University of Southern California, 1996; Sami A. Ofeish, ‘Lebanon's Second Republic: secular talk, sectarian application’. Arab Studies Quarterly Vol.21, No.1, (Winter), 1999, p.99 and Elizabeth Picard, ‘Political identities and communal identities: shifting mobilization among the Lebanese Shî’a through ten years of war,

conflict. For instance, Owen has provided a relatively accurate account of the peasant's challenges to muqata'ji rule which:

soon assumed the aspect of a communal struggle between groups of Maronites and Druzes. This was partly a result of a growing tendency to think and act in religious or confessional terms...Worried by signs of peasant restiveness in their own villages in the south, disturbed by reports of Maronite purchase of arms, the Druze leaders did their best to protect their own class position by stressing the need for communal solidarity in the face of outside attack, thus giving the dispute a directly religious character' (Owen 1981, 162).

Such a situation points to the importance of looking at Ottoman practices of rule. The birth of consociational principles can be traced to the Ottoman practices of the nineteenth century (contrary to the argument by most scholars which trace Lebanese consociationalism to 1943 when Lebanon gained its independence). As Norton reveals: 'in point of fact, the modalities of the political system were well established long before 1943. For example, in 1841, Bashir III organized a confessional council of ten members (three Maronites, three Druze, one Greek Catholic, one Greek Orthodox, one Shi'i, and one Sunni) that represented the country's divergent social [read communal] identities' (Norton 1987, 6). Similarly, the 1861 *Règlement Organique* (Organic Law) that followed the 1860 peasant revolts and massacres is a power-sharing arrangement which 'provided for the establishment of a [twelve-member] Administrative Representative Council to consist of two representatives of each major confessional community'² whereby the six major communities were the Maronite, Greek Orthodox, Catholic, Druze, Shi'a, and Sunni Muslim.

Moreover, Norton reveals that in 1864, grievances with the Organic Law led to the readjustment of representation on the council, 'to give greater numerical representation to the Maronites, Druze, and Greek Orthodox, but here again, confessional diversity was recognized. While the ratios changed from time to time, the formula remained' (Norton 1987, 6). Thus, it may be said that a power-sharing arrangement that conformed to an extent with consociational theory existed in pre-independent Lebanon. This was revised in 1864 when it no longer adhered to the consociational principle of proportional communal representation, in the view of the dominant or "significant" communal groups. These successive power-sharing arrangements may thus be seen as an embryonic form of consociational practice that would evolve later on with the drafting of the 1926 Lebanese Constitution and would be systematically institutionalised with the advent of the confessional system, embodied in the 1943 so-called National Pact and the independence of Lebanon.

1975-1985. In Dennis L. Thompson & Dov Ronen, eds. *Ethnicity, politics, and development*, pp.159-78. Boulder [Colorado]: Lynne Rienner Publishers, p.159, 1986.

² Norton reveals that following the 1860 rebellion, 'under pressure from the British, Russian, French, and Austrians- each of which had their own Lebanese confessional client- the *Règlement Organique* of 1861 was acceded to by the Ottomans, the ostensible imperial power' (Norton 1987, 6).

The end of Ottoman rule and the period of the French Mandate over Lebanon, 1920-1943, also witnessed power-sharing arrangements, with the existence of the Central Administrative Council. Moreover, as with the consociational principles of grand coalition and proportional representation (consisting of a broad-scope council which was however procedurally brought to reflect the proportional and powerful dominance of Druze and Maronites over the remaining sectarian groupings), the principle of segmental autonomy was addressed as early as the 1920s. As Hourani remarks, Articles 6 and 8 of the Mandatory Agreement over Lebanon addressed the issue of segmental autonomy:

Article 8 states the necessity of guaranteeing the most complete liberty of conscience and worship; the equal treatment of all inhabitants irrespective of differences of race, religion, language; and the right to maintain their own schools. Article 6 requires the Mandatory Power to respect the personal status and religious interests of the different sections of the population (Hourani 1946, 181).

Thus, the sense of communal distinctiveness brought about by Ottoman rule was strengthened by the French divide and rule policy. Indeed, both articles seem to encourage communal groups to view/perceive themselves differently, thereby fostering inter-communal separatism and planting the historical seeds of perpetual societal fragmentation along religious sectarian lines. As to the Central Administrative Council in place, Chalouhi reveals that the French abolished it when it 'called for a larger, independent Lebanon with a democratic government with rights for all minorities'. However, 'a new council was formed in 1926 and this succeeded in adopting a constitution which called for the establishment of a legislature made up of both a Senate and Chamber of Deputies' and in effect 'the legislature combined all the country's groups and gave the new state a constitution' (Chalouhi 1978, 54-5). The moves towards the drafting and adopting of the constitution were preceded by an emerging trend towards elitist rule, which effectively impacted on the rules of the game laid down by the constitution. Indeed, Khazen reveals as follows:

In post-1920 Lebanon, a distinct pattern of elitist politics began to take shape: this was particularly the case of a new Christian elite, mostly Francophile, drawn from the ranks of an increasingly influential Christian bourgeoisie... Muslim leaders, particularly those who were initially reluctant to identify with the newly-created Greater Lebanon, were co-opted into the system by a policy of patronage, which attracted traditional leaders and other politicians from established notable families (Khazen 1993, 54).

As such, what it often mistakenly referred to as being an emerging tradition of political/elite accommodation ³ towards the peaceful governance of Lebanon backed by the French appears to be a convergence of economic interests, power and influence among external players and local

³ For instance, Messarra and Lijphart often refer to Lebanese politicians as having genuinely invented consociational rules to promote peaceful communal coexistence, giving evidence for their arguments by relying and in effect misinterpreting what actually is an the interest-based relationship that existed among the political and economic elite in Lebanon. Both scholars argue that elite efforts to engineer such consociational practices stem from their desire to promote peaceful structures of governance for Lebanese society, while in fact the underlying reasons for cooperation appear to lie precisely within mutual interests that such traditional feudal and feuding elites shared in common.

traditional influential politicians. Such a situation finds its origins in patronage and the sharing of common economic and power interests. Hence, during the period of the French mandate over Lebanon 1920-1943, this complex unstable situation continued to exist as French rule worked at preventing the emergence of a unifying nationalist ideology among the various confessional groups and of traditions of political accommodation among the elites (apart from one based on economic interests) that would make communal coexistence peaceful. As many researchers reveal, 'in both Syria and Lebanon, the French employed divide-and-rule tactics to exacerbate religious and ethnic tensions in order to frustrate the emergence of unified, mass-based nationalist movements' (Bill & Springborg 2000, 170) with colonialism transforming 'the social, political and economic significance of religion into a reified order wherein decontextualized religious identities alone defined individuals' (Makdisi 1996, 24). Similarly, Ayoub recalls that 'intercommunal tensions were more the byproduct of the manipulation of communal identity and loyalties to serve the ideological, political and geopolitical ends of various internal players and external powers-especially the colonial powers' (Ayoub 1994, 241).⁴ As such, with the establishment of a political economy heavily dependent on the West, the interests of external powers coincided with the interests of local confessional elites and traditional notables who formed the political and economic elite of the newly emerging country and who procedurally realised that one way of ruling the country and furthering their interests was to play on the communal distinctiveness of the various confessional groups, a situation largely made possible by the installation of the Ottoman confessional millet system.

With the advent of independence in 1943, Lebanon witnessed a period of stable consensual politics under Bishara al-Khoury (a Christian Maronite and the first President of independent Lebanon) and Riad al-Solh (a Muslim Sunni and the independent country's first Prime Minister) until 1952. The Camille Chamoun term (1952-1958) was, by all means, less stable as it witnessed two crises. Though the 1952 crisis (explained in detail below) was quickly resolved, its causes were not, and as such, the 1952-1958 period was, for many reasons, a period of latent instability, that degenerated during the 1958 crisis (also explained below in detail). During President Chihab's term in office (1958-1964), a programme of reforms, better known as Chihabism, aimed at making the economy more socially centered and insulating it from the control of the political elite allied to powerful merchants.⁵ Hanf notices that the Lebanese state functioned best during the Shihabist era, when the

⁴ For similar accounts, see Muhammad Faour, The silent revolution in Lebanon: changing values of the youth. Beirut: American University of Beirut, 1998, p.56.

⁵ In the words of Ajami, 'He was the first President of Lebanon who realized that the "merchant Republic" of ruling oligarchs and feudal chieftains had to come to terms with the dispossessed, that its chaotic life had to be organized in a new way. Lebanon's wild capitalism, Shihab understood, had to incorporate ideas of social responsibility, had to accept taxation. He wanted to increase the power of the state vis-à-vis the warlords' (Ajami 1986, 87). For an account of Chihab's redistributive social policy and attempt to establish a welfare state, see Khalifah, Bassem, The rise and fall of

state installed its power by promoting a greater measure of economic and social justice (Hanf 1990, 69).⁶ Indeed, the state became more powerful during Chihab's term and in the early years of President Helou's term in office (1964-1970), as a result of Chihabism's attempts to build the state structures and institutions necessary for nation-building and move the Lebanese confessional system from an actor-centered model to an institution-centered model. However, it should be said that the response of traditional politicians to Chihabism somehow illustrates the resilience of the strong linkages that have long existed (and currently still exist) in Lebanon among traditional politicians and powerful business groups. Indeed, 'traditional leaders of the various confessions mobilized against Shihabism...and defeated it in the 1970 election' (Bill & Springborg 2000, 200). Additionally, the latter years of Helou's presidency witnessed militant Palestinian activism that impacted on the stability of the system and suggested latent social instability.

President Franjiya's term in office (1970-1975) witnessed a return to pre-Chihabist consociational practices of rule among a select association of political and economic elites dominating a weak state. Additionally, the dismantlement of Chihabist state structures (such as the *Deuxième Bureau* or *Moukhabarat*) made it impossible to control Palestinian militant activism. The influx of Shi'i migrants from the turbulent South of Lebanon to Beirut deprived them of both the Southern and the Beirut patronage system. This exclusion drove them to turn to an alliance with some Lebanese radical groups such as the Communist Party and other leftist groups that proliferated on the Lebanese scene. Hence, a pattern of Muslim resentment, as a result of their exclusion from the political system (and their feelings of deprivation), began to take shape. With the radicalisation of Shi'is and Palestinians (who were also excluded from the Lebanese consociational formula), the consociational system broke down. Consensus among the traditional elites over the need to preserve the stability of the system was shattered, especially when their inability to do so was facilitated by the emergence of new sectarian leaders able to channel class discontent along communal and narrow sectarian lines. The various civil wars of the 1975-1990 will be mentioned in the section of this chapter dealing with the causes of the war.⁷

B. The 1926 Lebanese Constitution

According to Dahl, Lebanon is a 'full-polyarchy inaugurated before independence' (Dahl 1971, 197). With the emergence of the "democracy with adjectives" phenomenon, a more contemporary

Christian Lebanon. Toronto: York Press Limited, pp.121-29, 1997. For a detailed examination, see Nawaf Kabbara. Shihabism in Lebanon, 1958-1970: the failure of a hegemonic project. Doctoral Thesis. United Kingdom: University of Essex, 1988.

⁶ Translated from French.

⁷ See Section F. in this chapter.

classification of the Lebanese political system would label Lebanon a sectarian “democracy”. However, to be able to classify this sectarian system of democracy in more detail, it should be determined how the pre-war Lebanese political system relates to the model of consociational democracy. As a first start, the most important articles of the 1926 Lebanese Constitution (i.e., the ones that are useful for the purposes of this thesis) will be examined in order to locate consociational constitutional principles.

As a start, Article 9 recognises the freedom of conscience, the freedom and respect of religious and general belief and the respect of personal status affairs:

Liberty of conscience is absolute. By rendering homage to the Almighty, the State respects all creeds and guarantees and protects their free exercise, on condition that they do not interfere with public order. It also guarantees to individuals, whatever their religious allegiance, the respect of their personal status and their religious interests (Bustros 1973).

Article 10 acknowledges the right of different religious communities to run their own schools and teaching practices as long as this does not harm public/civil order and provided this respects moral values and religious sanctity and holiness of all religions:

Education is free so long as it is not contrary to public order and to good manners and does not touch the dignity of creeds. No derogation shall affect the right of communities to have their schools, subject to the general prescriptions on public education edicted by the State (Bustros 1973).

Clearly, these two articles conform to the above-mentioned articles of the Mandatory Agreement over Lebanon. By allocating a high degree of autonomy to the segments of the plural society to run their own affairs, both articles conform closely to the definition of segmental autonomy and foster it. While the aim is to institutionally allow each communal group the capacity and laxity to preserve its own cultural heritage, value system and religious belief, such an organisation of society lends support to the argument that societal separatism is likely to occur. Additionally, it may be said that this organisation of society has led many Lebanese people to pride themselves on the plethora of communal institutions that the Lebanese state allows. This often undermines the detrimental impact this has had on their ability to perceive the crosscutting class cleavages as unifying factors across communal groups. Needless to say, this has had a detrimental impact on societal stability and on the stability of the system overall.

Indeed, by giving every community the false sense that it is particular, unique and distinctive, this article has contributed to procedural separatism within Lebanese society and has prevented the emergence of a unifying and common education system among all Lebanese people, irrespective of their sect. Indeed, segmental autonomy has manifested itself in the existence of different religious

courts to regulate personal status, as well as a plethora of schools, welfare organisations, charities, newspapers and other mediums of ideological dissemination to cater for the needs of the various communal groups, and further foster societal separatism. To the Lebanese elites, playing on the perceived communal distinctiveness nourished the clientelistic relationship they entertained with their followers. To the Lebanese people, this false, exaggerated sense of distinctiveness has made elite manipulation easier. While a number of researchers into Lebanese politics argue that this situation (coupled with the somehow geographical isolation of communal groups) reflects an effort by the political elite to prevent or reduce the risk of the outbreak of communal conflict, it can be said that it is part of the strategy of traditional notables to keep the groups separate, and make them suspicious of each other. Indeed, this situation has prevented the emergence of class-based consciousness. Instead, the elites have been able to market their own nationalist versions that have a narrow dimension and a divisive effect on society as a whole, and on social stability.

When it comes to communal representation in the political system and civil service recruitment, Article 95 reads as follows:

Temporarily, and in deference to equity and accord, the various sects shall be equitably represented in public offices and in the formation of Cabinets, barring any detriment to the interests of the State (Hoss 1984, 74).

This article touches on the political as well as economic aspects of the Lebanese system of rule, since all communities shall receive a fair proportional share of the political power and economic resources available to the state (administration and government). As Halpern stresses, this touches on 'all civil service positions, [even] including teaching at the national university,⁸ [which] were to be (and were in fact) apportioned proportionally by sect' (Halpern 1984, 15-60). As such, it is consistent with the three-dimensional consociational principle of proportional representation, which speaks of political representation, civil service appointments and the allocation of public funds.

However, a number of points arise from the above. First, the fact that such an organisation of communal representation and allocation of economic power, i.e., the confessional one, was made temporary seems to indicate that it may have a number of shortcomings, but more importantly, that it is not so readily possible to have a better organisation. Second, one point that should be stressed is that such an organisation of political representation and civil service recruitment may and often does harm the interests of the state and the nation: this approach to confessionalism is embodied in proportional communal representation, especially at the civil service level. It often limits the ability

⁸ A situation which has led, according to the current Culture Minister Ghazi Aridi, to nepotism being 'rife at the state-run Lebanese University' which is 'full of nests of chaos, nepotism and sectarianism' (Daily Star Online [hereafter DSO], 21 July 2003).

of the state to cater effectively for the needs of the population, irrespective of sensitive communal considerations. This may force it to recruit more state, army and education officials than needed, in order to meet representational criteria. Third, the provisions of Article 95 conform to the consociational principle of proportionality, which, like Article 95, does not specify exact formulas for the allocation of political representation and economic power, but only of adequate and fair criteria. However, the sensitive, complex character of such an issue seems to indicate that there will generally be communal resentment as to what constitutes fair, equitable criteria, as the scenario presented by Norton, discussed above, reveals. Hence, communal resentment over such an issue may well harm the stability of society, and may lead to communal conflict and a reduction in the prospect of democratic stability. Moreover, a real procedural problem of representation may manifest itself, and this is even more likely to endanger the stability of the system. Thus, there seems to be an inbuilt tension within the provisions of Article 95 itself.

As to the communal or minority right to mutual veto, Halpern reveals that the mutual veto 'is assumed in the Lebanese system by the existence of grand coalition and proportionality' (Halpern 1984, 161). Indeed, as Picard has put it, Article 57 guarantees the use of the veto right by the minority. Until 1990, it has protected the country against any drift towards authoritarian practices by the hegemonic group, the Maronite community. Picard however warns that yet although the article was frequently a source of paralysis, this veto has been then a key factor for democratic functioning in pre-war Lebanon (Picard 1997, 644).⁹

C. The 1943 National Pact

In 1943, Lebanon gained its independence and consociational politics began to be applied. Before this section elaborates in great detail on the 1943 National Pact, it will offer an account of its main provisions and conventions. Briefly, the main convention of the pact states that the Maronites relinquish French protection while the Sunnis give up on their demands for union with Syria in return. As of its provisions, the pact reserves the presidency for the Maronite community, the Premiership for the Sunni community, the speakership for the Shi'i community and the office of the deputy Prime Minister for the Greek Orthodox community. In addition, the pact speaks of proportional representation for each sectarian grouping in government and in parliament (that of which is set on a six to five ratio favouring Christians).

⁹ Translated from French.

Most researchers argue that the 1943 National Covenant 'was not, in fact a formal constitution [as in it did not replace the constitution] but [was] rather an addendum to the constitution' (Deegan 1993, 106) or that it was a 'para-constitutional implicit pact' (Salamé 1996a, 2-3). However, it is important to point out that the pact is the actual translation of the constitution in procedural terms. As such, it constitutes a testing field for the operation of the consociational model, more so than the constitution, since the former reflects the dominant position of some communal groups in Lebanese society, and illustrates how such a dominant position significantly excludes other communal groups. For instance, Suleiman calls the pact the 'unwritten constitution of Lebanon' (Suleiman 1967, 21) while Hudson refers to it as 'an act of creative statesmanship by two liberal politicians' and 'Lebanon's "real" constitution' (Hudson 1995, 733). Salibi agrees with the above-mentioned argument that the pact was to 'supplement the formal Constitution of the country', but he is also quick to note that it was to 'have equal effectiveness' (Salibi 1988, 185). As Rondot aptly puts it, the constitution is the 'pays légal' while the pact 'is the Constitution of the pays réel' (Farah 1975, page 51).¹⁰ Indeed, the pact represents a turning point in the pre-war Lebanese political system, because it put into practice the constitution in a way that proves crucial to any understanding and evaluation of pre-war Lebanese consociational politics and of their failure to bring about democratic stability. The pact thus explains much more about consociational politics than the constitution does. In short, the National pact is the procedural institutional design of rule that regulates the conduct of politics and the distribution of effective power, influence and executive decision-making. Hence, a detailed evaluation and assessment of the pact are crucial for the purposes of the present study, since the pact regulates executive decision-making in procedural terms.

It is useful here to recall the main contention of this research, namely that the main feature and determining dimension that allows researchers to test the successful operability of the consociational model rests within the concept, form and scope of the grand coalition (i.e., elite rule). It is effectively within the grand coalition that executive decision-making lies, and where the ability of the model to deliver on the promise of democratic stability can be meaningfully tested. As such, while the constitution tends to reflect the general rules of the game that organise the governance of Lebanon, the pact is in effect the actual translation of these rules into action and in that sense, it reflects the structure of politics in Lebanon. Indeed, the pact unveils the dominant, hegemonic dimension of pre-war consociational politics, rather than what Messarra refers to as their consensual character. Hence, this thesis considers the pact to be the grand coalition in pre-war Lebanon and treats the agreements of the pact and their translation into practice as the effective procedural elite

¹⁰ For a comprehensive account and commentary of what has been written about the importance of the pact as opposed to the constitution and the constitutional dimension the pact took in procedural terms, see Bassem el Jisr, *Mithāq 1943: limātha kān wa hal saqat?* [2nd Edition]. Beirut: Dar An-Nahar lil Nachr, 1997, pp.312-323.

behavior against which one may evaluate the operability of “consociationalism in action”. Indeed, as Halpern writes, ‘Lijphart points to the Lebanese National Pact which apportioned legislative seats and executive positions on the basis of religious affiliation...as an example of the institutional expression of the concept of grand coalition’ (Halpern 1984, 68). When the pact entered into effect, it resulted in a hegemonic system of rule, instead of promoting a consensual pattern of politics, contrary to what consociational theory holds as per the ways in which the model is supposed to work.

The pact, or the Gentlemen’s Agreement was an ‘uncodified understanding’ (Salamé 1996a, 2-3), an unwritten verbal agreement concluded in 1943 between Khoury and Solh, with the involvement of external players. It should be said that Khoury was in close family association with Michel Chiha, a prominent Catholic banker, as well as other prominent personalities that can be described as the pre-war banking-financial elite (which was predominantly Catholic). Therefore, such associations raise questions whether Khoury can be said to be the representative of the Maronite community. As of Solh, he represented the mercantile-commercial elite of the coastal cities, which was predominantly Sunni and Orthodox. It may be said that together, Khoury and Solh had an interest in preserving the stability of the system so as to safeguard their business interests.

Habib writes that the pact is considered to be ‘an essential [if not the essential in this author’s view] consociational element in the Lebanese system’ (Habib 1995). Indeed, Kabbani observes that ‘although the Constitution permits other forms of government, the 1943 National Pact institutionalised consociational democracy as a constitutional reality’ (Kabbani 1986, 95).¹¹ This makes it more useful to look at the pact in detail for the purposes of the present study. There is a certain degree of confusion surrounding the much-talked about pact, and it seems there will be no final word as regards many of the events that brought it into being. Some aspects of the pact on which scholarly consensus exists are the fact that the pact ‘was produced behind closed doors’ (Khatib 1994, 69), that it ‘was never officially presented to Parliament and voted upon as such’ (Mallat 1987, 130) and that it was ‘presented to the people as a fait accompli’ (Makdisi 1996, 25).

As regards the two-fold dimension of the pact, it should be noted that it contains two main aspects, an internal one and an external one. When it comes to the external one, a compromise that speaks of the national identity and foreign policy of independent Lebanon, there is no scholarly consensus as to when and how it was made public. While Barak argues that it ‘was immediately made public’, Khazen notes that ‘Solh’s ministerial declaration on 7 October 1943 is considered to be the first

¹¹ Translated from French provided.

verbal enunciation of the National Pact' (Khazen 1991, 38). He does not specify, however, whether the internal aspect, dealing with the proportional representation in the various institutions of the state, was also made public on that occasion. For instance, Barak holds that it 'was not publicly announced', noting however that 'time has shown that it was no less binding than its first [i.e., the pact's external] part' (Barak 2000, 3).

As to the oft-heard claim that the pact was conducted between Khoury and Solh alone, Khazen reveals that 'to be sure, the Pact was not as spontaneous as it appears to have been. The groundwork was done prior to the Solh-Khoury agreement in the summer of 1943. A well-structured distribution of political offices along sectarian lines was devised, once again, with the assistance of outsiders' (Khazen 1991, 36). Indeed, referring to the 6:5 parliamentary representation ratio of Christians to Muslims, the author points out that 'this confessional arrangement in government office was the outcome of negotiations involving Lebanese and Egyptian leaders, as well as British General Spears and French General Catroux' (Khazen 1991, 36). As such, the attempt for the pact to create a set of institutions that would respond somewhat to the needs of the various Lebanese communal groupings and recognise the balance of power that exists among them seems to have involved outside powers. This suggests the difficulty that local elites face in engineering consociational practices without a heavy dose of external involvement. Against this background, Lijphart's claim that Lebanese politicians invented consociational rules in 1943 seems to be problematic. Indeed, consociationalism appears to be a method that is often resorted to with the significant involvement in the form of external arbitration and internal mediation/negotiation, rather than a genuine, spontaneous choice of governance. These peculiar aspects of the grand coalition embodied in the pact point to the many medium-term and long-term shortcomings that such structures of rule entail. Indeed, while the Lebanese parties to the pact are Solh and Khoury, the external parties are more numerous, suggesting that consociational structures of rule often emerge as a result of a convergence between external and internal interests among very few players (who do not hold legitimacy as they cannot be said to be representative of the population).

The pact is effectively an agreement between the representatives of the two most powerful, and hence "significant" communities in Lebanon. As such, it conforms closely to the definition of the concept of the grand coalition, as provided by Lijphart's consociational theory. Indeed, the Sunnis and the Maronites make up a large majority of the Lebanese population, are the significant groups, and their somehow dominant and powerful position compared to the remaining groups explains the scope of the pact. Hence, its highly elitist nature and more importantly, the translation of this highly elitist dimension in practice may offer an explanation as to why the system was characterised by

governmental paralysis (i.e., at the executive decision-making level),¹² witnessed crises involving violence twice in the 1950s and completely collapsed in the mid-1970s with the outbreak of the Lebanese war. Indeed, the collapse of the system points out that there is a structural problem with the organisation of political sectarian rule, which is based upon wealth and power and strategic alliances. Though the pact was a deal between the leaders of the most important or significant groups in Lebanese society, Bishara and Khoury, its translation into practice brought some accommodation of the confessional groups to the dominant hegemonic political position of the Maronites, and to a lesser extent, the Sunnis. Indeed, Barak writes that for the elites who launched the pact:

Consociational democracy was not just a means to accord every ethnic community its due share in the government so as to avoid internal strife, but also an *instrument* to preserve the existing political and socioeconomic order and their own predominant position in their state, that is, to lay the foundations that would enable them to manage its affairs for decades to come (Barak 2000, 21-2).

Johnson reminds us, moreover, that the Sunnis 'saw independence not simply as a means for removing the hated French patrons of the Christians, but also as a change for expanding the opportunities of Muslims in the state bureaucracy and the economy' (Johnson 1986, 127) and Makdisi stresses that 'the national pact, itself a result of elite compromises, essentially legitimated a system of patronage and a division of spoils among the elites of the new nation-state, thus betraying the inability to locate a genuinely national base' (Makdisi 1996, 25). Similarly, for Khalifah, 'the Pact also gave a strong basis for the common interests of the Maronite and Sunni establishments to become the main holders of power among all the Lebanese sects. Hence the multi-sectarian balance took a dual form, the balance between the Maronite President and what he represents, and the Sunni Prime Minister and the forces and interests he represents... Yet the exclusion of the other minorities did not always mean that the interests of these two confessions were always in balance and harmony' (Khalifah 1997, 10).

Khazen, neither endorses nor rejects such comments, but presents the leftist view of many scholars who saw in the pact a 'capitalist confessional deal aimed at promoting the interests of some segments of Lebanese society at the expense of others'. Khazen elaborates on such an approach to the pact by citing Daher, who argues that the pact 'reflects an overlap between confessional and economic (class interests)' and leading Khazen to argue that such an interpretation 'creates a situation of total economic dependency on the imperialist West' (Khazen 1991, 4). Indeed, the pact reflects that the interests of Bishara and Khoury converged in the materialisation of the pact.

¹² For example, Kliot writes that 'confessionalism also became institutionalized in the executive, often paralyzing the

The scope of representation of the pact is a clear illustration of consociational principles. It has a highly elitist scope of representation of the grand coalition as prescribed by Lijphart, elite dominance, a central role that the dominant elites play in the creation of a system of governance for a plural society and in governing the latter and finally, the group exclusion it entails. Likewise, the provisions of the pact (both its internal and external dimensions) are a clear manifestation of the system of governance that is likely to result from this grand coalition, i.e., a confessional system of rule based on a coalition that is limited in scope and internally unequal in power and influence. Indeed, as Owen writes, 'there was widespread elite support for a political system based on the principle of sectarian representation' (Owen 2000, 166).

Before discussing the narrow scope of the grand coalition, its structure (i.e., the components of the grand coalition) and more importantly the rules that define the relationships among these components, the discussion will address the undemocratic, unbalanced nature of the pact. This lack of balance explains the detrimental, destabilising impact it has had on the conduct of politics for the three decades to follow. It has also affected the organisation of Lebanese society and the stability of the system as a whole, thereby contributing to its breakdown in 1975. Here, one should return to the critical discussion of pacting, undertaken in Chapter 3. This is because pacting is a frequent feature/manifestation of consociationalism, and it is particularly useful to shed more light on the undemocratic aspect of pacts, such as the one under examination in the present chapter. It may be said that the chief failing of the pact can be attributed to the paradoxes that it has entailed, and that such uncoded agreements normally engender.

Lijphart himself echoes such concerns, arguing that power-sharing 'is not sufficiently democratic [as] this charge is based on the importance of compromises negotiated often behind closed doors by the leaders of the various groups in power-sharing systems' (Lijphart 1995a, 860). Clearly, such an observation conform to the secretive character that the pact's negotiations took. For instance, Picard argues that 'it would be abusive to speak of consociational democracy in the case of Lebanon and to compare it to the Swiss and Dutch systems since it is obvious that the Lebanese populations were not consulted', and concludes that the pact 'is a consensus with which only the elite is concerned' (Picard 1988, 119). Similarly, Khazen speaks of two faulty assumptions that the pact was based on and that will be treated separately in the present discussion. The first faulty assumption, according to the author, is an internal one, based on the belief that elite consensus reflects grass-roots communal support.

As argued earlier, consociationalism is essentially an elitist form of democracy with a significant loss of mass involvement and participation in the political process. Moreover, Chapter 3 has shown that democracy tends to be essentially a way of dealing with group interests. Consequently, it is debatable whether the Lebanese populations would be consulted under the consociational framework where the elite role is central to the model, which is in effect an actor-centered model. Accordingly, Picard and Khazen's arguments in this respect are not applicable. It would be simplistic to assume that the negotiations leading to the pact would involve some sort of popular referendum as to the populations' acceptance of the structure and decisions of the pact. Indeed, this would be defeating the purpose of the pact, which aims to establish an elitist form of rule and to maintain the Lebanese population 'within the communitarian framework under the control of traditional notables, heads of clans, landowners and clerical authorities', as Picard notes. This is especially true when considering the fact that the Lebanese elites, particularly the Maronites, have been unwilling to conduct a population census (though the first and last one was conducted in 1932, i.e., 11 years before the pact), due to the sensitivity of this issue. This is because such a census would reveal the numerical strength/weakness of each of the communal groups. Indeed, it should be noted that it would not have been possible for the pact to materialise had there been a popular consultation as to its acceptance by the people, and had it involved members of the remaining Lebanese communal groups.

Second, a problem related to the scope of the pact is in terms of the parties involved in it, as it is a 'pact between the two most powerful [or significant] communities (Maronite and Sunni) rather than one between all communities', hence making it 'more adequate to speak of a communitarian pact rather than of a national pact' (Picard 1988, 119).¹³ For Picard, such a narrow dimension has translated into the breakdown of the system: 'it would also be more reasonable to look within these two distinctions, for the principal source of dramatic failure of this consensus system' (Picard 1988, 119). Indeed, the major remaining communities, the Christian Orthodox, Catholic, Muslim Shi'ite and the Druze communities, were not parties to the pact, and this has contributed significantly to communal resentment and frustration. However, this is not to say, as Abukhalil contends, that the pact 'should not be regarded as a form of what consociational theorists call a grand coalition, as what Lijphart considers an evidence for the Lebanese version of consociational democracy' (Abukhalil 1988, 54). Contrary to Abukhalil, the present study argues that the pact was a clear manifestation of the concept of the grand coalition in action, as the Maronite and Sunni communities together formed the significant groups of Lebanon's plural society, and enjoyed a

¹³ Translated from French. For similar views, see Farid el-Khazen, The communal pact of national identities: the making and politics of the 1943 National Pact, (Papers on Lebanon 12). Oxford: CLS, 1991, p.5 and As'ad Abukhalil,

political position in society significantly dominant as compared to other groups. A significant amount of communal and societal instability that the narrow-scope pact generated resulted from the exclusion of other communal groups from it. This is best illustrated by Khalidi's account of the pre-war, duopolistic character of the Lebanese political system. As Khalidi writes:

The Sunni-Maronite partnership in the formulation of the Covenant gave rise to a situation in which the leaders of the two communities at the highest level and with few exceptions looked upon the entire Lebanese scene through a bisectarian prism. This prism tended by the same token to be exclusivist and somehow able to block from view the existence of other sects, Christian and Muslim alike (Khalidi 1989b, 380).

Khalidi's observations as to communal group exclusion and its impact on the system as a whole are crucial for an understanding of the collapse of the system. As discussed earlier, group exclusion from decision-making is highly detrimental to the stability of a plural society. Thus, the group exclusion inherent in the consociational principle of grand coalition brings about significant communal frustration and resentment, and in this sense, can hardly be considered able to protect the interests of the various communal groups and a successful conflict-regulation mechanism. Rather, although the model and the concept of the grand coalition are supposed to generate and maintain democratic stability in theory, in practice, it results in a somewhat modified form of amicable majoritarianism or consensual duopoly at the elite level, especially when looking at their procedural aspects (as the use of the word significant seems to suggest). Hence, the applicability and operability of the consociational model of rule for plural societies may be questioned.

Indeed, Karl warns that successful pacts 'should be comprehensive, including virtually all politically significant actors' and that 'only if all such actors are included can vital interests be protected' (Karl quoted by Gill 2000, 54). However, he notes that in practice, pacts 'restrict the scope of representation so as to reassure traditionally-dominant elements that their vital interests will be respected...' (Karl quoted by Gill 2000, 54). The National Pact is a case in point. By restricting the scope of representation to the two most powerful or significant communities, it did not preserve and protect the other communities' vital interests. Rather, as Karl suggests, the pact merely reassured the traditionally dominant Maronite and the Sunni communities that their interests would continue to be respected.

A further issue to be addressed regarding the scope of representation of the pact is Leca's observation concerning the insecure, unstable aspect of political pacts in the West, and especially in the Arab world. He questions how such compromises might be durable between '“parties” that are not self-contained units, like states or armies but whose various salient identities... are not ranked

according to stable functional criteria but according to subtle situational shifts?' (Leca 1996, 50), concluding that 'even members of the so-called "stable democracies" were never reduced to the identity quartet: citizenship, occupational group, religious or ideological affiliation, party affiliation. [However], still, there the identity and substance of parties can be ascertained more securely than in the Arab world' (Leca 1996, 50). The unclear and misleading enunciation of the identity of Lebanon in the pact, (Arab and Western) and the vague outline of national and foreign policies, that is, the non-alignment policy stated in the pact, played an important role in moving it further away from being a stable conflict-regulating mechanism and hence, prevented it from generating democratic stability. The materialisation of the pact was made possible because of the temporary convergence of interests between the Maronite and Sunni confessional elites and because of their mutual willingness to structure and organise this partnership in more concrete terms. Nonetheless, when this partnership no longer seemed strategic or of mutual benefit and when other factors challenged it, the pact could no longer serve as an effective conflict-regulating mechanism, as the main or "significant" beneficiaries of this relationship no longer benefited from the latter. As such, the pact points to the structural flaws and problems associated with the organisation of political sectarian rule.

A final issue to be addressed regarding the scope of representation of the pact is expressed in the words of Khazen. While pointing out that this was/is not unique to Lebanon, Khazen argues that the fact that 'communal leaders were willing to reach a vague compromise was no guarantee of its acceptance by the people they theoretically represented' (Khazen 1991, 39). Indeed, even among the Maronite and the Sunni communities, those significant, major and dominant groups within Lebanese society whose dual relationship was supposed to have been regulated by the pact in a satisfactory manner, the conclusion of the latter did not seem to generate widespread support. For instance, Makdisi writes that 'whereas compromises between the elites were meant to divide power among different communities, they in fact divided power among the elites of various communities at the expense of the divided and disenfranchised majority' (Makdisi 1996, 26). Indeed, this situation is because, as well as the pact having been an expression of Lijphart's consociational principle of grand coalition, the provisions of the pact also touched on the principle of proportional representation. In this sense, the pact elaborated on Article 95 of the 1926 Constitution (discussed above) and procedurally gave it an effective shape. The remaining paragraphs of this section will elaborate on the consociational principle of proportionality embodied in the pact.

In the words of Tueni, 'in constitutional terms, Lebanese democracy moved from the doctrine of separation of powers to the notion of the distribution of powers among the communities, a strange and most unpractical form of partition...' (Tueni 1991, 21). Indeed, among the Sunni and the Maronite communities, even though the pact did not, and could not have engendered group exclusion as they were both represented in the grand coalition, the pact arrangements continued to reflect the dominant political position of the Maronites in Lebanese society as compared to the Sunnis in an indirect manner, i.e., by procedurally carrying out that obviously dominant position to another level, the level of proportional representation in the state apparatus. Such consociational mechanisms appear to be increasingly unable to regulate peaceful communal coexistence in plural societies, in that their procedural manifestations continue to reflect the real situation on the ground, rather than any a higher ideal. In this sense, it is debatable whether consociationalism realises the promise of democratic stability for plural societies.

For instance, judging from the treatment and handling of the interests of the various communal groups (significant and less significant alike) and their position in society, it can hardly be said that the consociational model was concerned with the equal treatment of groups. Under the pre-war Lebanese consociational model, there was no attempt at equality among groups. Rather, one group, the Maronites, predominated. They sought to arrange matters to their own satisfaction and interests based on its actual political power and influence in Lebanese society in relation to the remaining groups. Against this background, the consociational model cannot appear to have succeeded in establishing a framework of governance concerned with the equal treatment of groups. Rather, it has created tensions among the significant groups in society and has perpetuated divisions among all the communal groups in society, which does not positively predispose the country to peaceful communal coexistence.

Second, it should be said that the 1943 National Pact offered an example of status inequity between the sects. This inequity is best seen when looking at the internal dimension of the pact in terms of the 6 to 5 Christian/Muslim representation ratio. In this respect, Picard raises the following question: 'Isn't it significant that at the time when the pact was concluded, it gave preponderance to Christians over Muslims while the demographic equilibrium benefited the latter?' (Picard 1988, 119).¹⁴ Indeed, the pact can clearly be seen as a procedural manifestation of the failure of the consociational model to conform in practice to the consociational principle of proportionality. Abukhalil, meanwhile, notes that the pact violated the proportionality principle: 'the lack of proportionality in the allocation of benefits was a major cause for anti-government resentment and

¹⁴ Translated from French.

protest, in both pre-1975 and post-civil war Lebanon' (Abukhalil 1988, 280). In fact, this internal provision of the pact was a clear compromise to the Maronite community in the light of its politically dominant position within Lebanese society. As a result, it failed to respond to the needs of the various communal groups, including the Sunni community, despite it being the second significant group. Against this background, the procedural dimensions of the consociational model seem to suggest that the application of the theory to plural societies may involve internal in-built structural flaws that cause societal resentment.

A discussion of the translation of these constitutional consociational features into practice, i.e., into executive decision-making through the practice of consociational politics is now necessary. Such a discussion starts with an examination of consociational politics during the 1943-1975 period and is bound to reveal significant departures from the model that are treated in this thesis as procedural manifestations of consociationalism, and more precisely, violations of consociational principles. In other words, the model does not work as the theory suggests and hence was unable to deliver on the promise of democratic stability for Lebanon. The next section will highlight the contradiction between textual statements and grand coalition pacting practices. It will show that constitutions tend to reflect the structure of power and dominance in society. Indeed, it should be said that the practice of pre-war Lebanese consociationalism was different from the consociational constitutional/institutional design embodied in the 1926 Constitution and the 1943 National Pact. As Steiner warns, 'it is not sufficient to look at the institutional setting of a country' but rather 'necessary to look beyond the institutional arrangements and to inquire how a political system operates in concrete decision-making situations' (Steiner 1981b, 347).

D. Consociational politics 1943-1975: deviations from consociational theory

'So long as everyone in Lebanon was satisfied politically, socially, and economically, democracy prevailed and consociational mechanisms worked smoothly. But when some players in the political system began to feel that power was slipping from their grasp or being snatched away by their rivals...almost nothing- neither formal and informal institutions, shared values nor respect for laws, norms, and rules of the game- deterred them from resorting to whatever means they could use to regain what they believed was rightfully theirs from time immemorial...or to defy the existing political order' (Barak 2000, 24-5).

This quote illustrates how the consociational model works in ways that are different from those described by consociational theory. The conduct of consociational politics in pre-war Lebanon shows how the consociational model deviates from consociational theory once it goes into operation. Indeed, when it comes to pre-war Lebanese consociational politics, they deviated from consociational theory in two important respects, exemplified by a procedural deviation from

accommodationist understandings (which are born out of a consociational spirit of rule) and another set of procedural deviations from consociational principles.

1. Deviations from accommodationist understandings

As a reminder to this discussion, the external dimension of the pact is a twin-fold elite accommodationist understanding based on mutual guarantees. It is difficult to determine the character of these understandings, and to say that they are consociational in the strict sense of the term. However, it is safe to say that they had an accommodationist or consensual dimension born from a consociational spirit of rule based on compromise. These understandings were subject to violations that came about as a consequence of the limited scope of both the constitution and the pact. In the words of Khazen, the pact is 'Lebanon's communal approach to *Realpolitik*... [It] is the quintessential example of political pragmatism: the lowest common denominator shared by the independence leaders' (Khazen 1991, 5).¹⁵ However, it is argued in this thesis that these violations are a likely manifestation of the Lebanese political system because of the in-built flaws in the internal logic of consociational theory, to which the constitution and the pact adhere. In this sense, they are treated as natural deviations of the consociational model from consociational theory, once it goes into action.

The emergence and institutionalisation of a tradition of political accommodation was defined earlier in terms of highly elitist (i.e., dominated by a Maronite and a Sunni) politics based on a situational convergence of interests. This shifting and situational character was reflected in pre-war Lebanese consociational politics in terms of elite behaviour, and compromises based on temporary and strategic alliances of interests. Indeed, the first aspect of the external dimension of the pact is concerned with Lebanon's foreign policy. It states as follows: 'no resort on the part of the Christians to soliciting western protection; no attempts on the part of the Muslims to pull Lebanon into a larger Arab unit' (Waterbury, 1996, 38). In this regard, George Naqqash's well-known comment that "the pact was based on two negations and that two negations do not make up a nation" and Salem's analysis of this matter are particularly relevant. Salem notes that this nonalignment policy 'left many questions unanswered' (Salem 1994a, 71): 'substate foreign policy orientations do not make life any easier for the central government; given the related problem of outside domination, the state's difficulty in formulating and implementing foreign policy is readily understandable' (Salem 1994a, 73). Indeed, as Abukhalil aptly put it: the pact 'specified what

¹⁵ For similar views, see Hani A. Faris, 'The failure of peacemaking in Lebanon, 1975-1989'. In Deirdre Collings, eds. Peace for Lebanon? From war to reconstruction, pp.17-30. London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1994, p.18. Kamal

should not be done, not what had to be done' (Abukhalil 1988, 68). As such, the government's policy of avoidance when it comes to controversial and sensitive issues that have sectarian ramifications lies at the heart of an understanding of the failure of the government to deal effectively in its foreign relations (which were not perceived similarly among all the communal groupings because of sectarian considerations) and hence, the failure of pre-war consociational politics. Against this background, the consociational model appears to be unable to bring about a sufficient amount of internal domestic unity over foreign matters, which would translate into the ability of the grand coalition to govern and conduct its foreign affairs on the basis of national interest, since it is difficult for the latter to come about within the sectarian communal framework of rule and the organisation of society. Hence, Lijphart's argument (treated in previous chapters) that foreign threats that are perceived as a common danger tend to facilitate consociational politics lacks internal consistency as the former are often not perceived as a common danger under the consociational framework of rule.

Faris, meanwhile, illustrates how the governmental policy of avoidance affected the stability of the system: 'when independence was achieved, the continued success of this policy of avoidance was predicated on two conditions being met at all times. Namely, that the Lebanese refrain from invoking their differences over fundamental issues and that regional and international powers refrain from exploiting these differences as a means to influence the country's foreign policy orientations or internal make-up. By the mid-1970s, both conditions were being seriously violated' (Faris 1994, 18). Indeed, it should be noted that, under the consociational structure of rule, the representatives of the different communal groups do not appear able to confront regional and international powers' intervention, partly aimed at influencing local orientations. Rather, in varying degrees and depending on each community's position (as well as perceived position) within society, such foreign interventions are perceived by community leaders as welcome, appear to them as having a protectionist character, and are hence invited, if not sought. This includes their ideological and somehow detrimental impacts on the stability of the system, and demonstrates all in an effort of the various communal leaders to buttress their local presence. Indeed, as Namani sums up, different sects 'sought sponsorship of external actors, and, conversely, external actors manipulated their Lebanese clients' (Namani 1982, Abstract).

Chalouhi elaborates on this issue while commenting on the orientations of the Maronite President of the Republic and the Muslim Sunni bloc respectively: 'Chamoun's identification with the West through the Western Pact and the Moslems' identification with Nasser and the Arabs was in essence

Joumblat shares similar views to Khazen. For Joumblat's commentary on the pact, see Bassem el Jisr, Mithāq 1943: limātha kān wa ḥal saqat? [2nd Edition]. Beirut: Dar An-Nahar lil Nachr, 1997, p.328.

a violation of the spirit of the National Pact upon which Lebanese consociationalism was built' (Chalouhi 1978, 136). Hence, procedurally speaking, the consociational model appears unable to bring about the necessary amount of elite consensus that would allow the system to reach political maturity and later on, to generate stability. Indeed, as Chalouhi argues, the unilateral decisions Chamoun took were 'a violation of both the principles of Agreement to disagree and of summit diplomacy. Elite cooperation on the fundamentals of national policy was violated...Chamoun's decisions were not a result of elite cooperation' (Chalouhi 1978, 135). The Maronite President's attempt to bypass the consociational accommodationist understandings of the pact suggest that the internal logic of consociational theory is flawed in terms of its simplistic assumption that the elites will play according the rules of the consociational game. When the model's ability to bring about democratic stability rests on the ability and willingness of the elites to play by such rules, the internal logic of the theory may be seriously questioned. In short, the lack of a clear national foreign policy (a result of governmental avoidance) in the reciprocal guarantees of the pact was subject to procedural internal violations and outside intervention.

A second accommodationist understanding, i.e. the second aspect of the external dimension of the pact, was intended to compromise between diverging perceptions among the different sects. It was concerned with the vague and somewhat ambiguous description of the identity and spirit of the country, and stated that Lebanon was a country with 'an Arab character' rather than an Arab country. In this respect, Salem classifies the contention that Lebanon is 'a bridge between East and West' as an unclear policy. The consequences of such a vague orientation left the country with no point of reference: 'the ideological void was filled in various stages by Arab nationalism, Syrian nationalism, revolutionary Marxism, Nasserite socialism and Islamic fundamentalism' (Salem 1993, 26). Another detrimental consequence is found in the words of Chalouhi: 'As one French newspaper commented: "A Lebanon quite intoxicated with Arabism and where 45 percent of Lebanon declined to be Lebanese is not a viable Lebanon' (Chalouhi, 1978, 60). Indeed, such vagueness has had a detrimental impact on the stability of the system and the cohesiveness of civil society, and has prevented the emergence of a unifying nationalist feeling able to effectively carry within it the necessary elements of societal stability. This in turn casts doubt on the ability of the model to generate democratic stability.

2. Deviations from consociational principles

The most widespread scholarly perspective argues that the pre-war Lebanese political system was consociational. However, given the significant deviations from consociational principles, and therefore departures from the model, Hudson argues that Lebanon was consociational on the whole

in the post-1943 era except for the Shehabist period, which he considers a para-military regime. Arguing against Salem's belief that in the 1943-1975 period, 'despite the considerable amount of partnering and power-sharing inherent in the arrangement, the system remained a predominantly presidential one' (Salem 1998, 14), Hudson notices important deviations from the consociational model but 'not enough to justify claiming that Lebanon did not actually undergo a consociational experiment' (Hudson 1988, 230). On the other hand, Abukhalil shares Salem's view, according to which the 1943-1975 Lebanese political system was presidential.

The main argument of this section is that the Lebanese political system departed from consociational principles of rule precisely because the procedural aspects and manifestations of the model do not allow it to function as consociational theory suggests. Hence, whether these procedural aspects of the model are treated (by different scholars on Lebanese politics) as violations or departures is not the main discussion. Rather, the present section argues that these manifestations are a result of inherent flaws in consociational theory. In other words, this author argues that the procedural aspects of pre-war consociational politics make it reasonable to equate the latter with presidential systems of rule. Put simply, the pre-war Lebanese consociational politics in action resulted in a presidential system of rule as a result of the extremely elitist scope of the executive grand coalition. Halpern describes the Lebanese political system as follows:

The National Pact...establishes the Lebanese executive as a grand coalition... the allocation of executive offices to particular sects on a permanent basis satisfies the essential requirement of grand coalition- joint governance by leaders of the major subcultures. In the Lebanese Cabinet...grand coalition is also the rule... (Halpern 1984, 153).

However, Halpern also notes that the system was presidential, pointing out that:

Power was concentrated in the hands of a President who was not accountable to the legislature that appointed him... Together, the President and the Cabinet had authority to dissolve Parliament. Presidential power was further solidified by the fact that the six-year presidential term was non-renewable, thereby removing the President from the influence and demands of the electorate (Halpern 1984, 150).

It is important to point out that, as Halpern rightly argues, the allocation of Cabinet portfolios did meet consociational principles of sectarian representation. However, Cabinet members (i.e., confessional communal leaders) were not always in a position to check on the power of the President. This therefore suggested the existence of a structural problem of rule, as exemplified by the politically dominant position of the Maronites and the translation of this position in procedural terms. Indeed, as Krayem notes, 'the constitution gave the Maronite President ultimate executive authority while not providing a mechanism for presidential accountability, especially since Parliament could question the Cabinet, but not the President' (Krayem 1997, 412). As a result, as Abukhalil observes, grand coalition, one of the major components of consociational democracy,

was not a feature of Lebanese political life: 'the concentration of power in the hand of a President, whose sectarian affiliation was not subject to alternation, left no room for a grand coalition. On the other hand, had a grand coalition type of government been really practised in Lebanon, it would have led to more moderation and accommodation' (Abukhalil 1988, 278). For the purposes of the present discussion, the 1952 and the 1958 crises constitute a case in point as to the dominant role that the President of the Republic played in pre-war Lebanese politics. This case suggests how the scope of the grand coalition was procedurally reduced to fit the representation of the upper strata of the Maronite community, i.e., the President, his immediate family relatives and his close associates as well as, to a limited extent, a few traditional confessional notables, who did not always enjoy the support of the communities they allegedly represented.

The 1952 crisis refers to an event where Khoury, the first President of the Republic, 'used his clear parliamentary majority to suspend the nonrenewal clause in his particular case in order to present himself for re-election... The Constitution had been easily circumvented by the ruling clique' (Hudson 1985b, 105): in the end, 'this failure was quickly repaired with a minimum of damage but the causes of the failure remained' (Hudson 1985b, 108). This crisis illustrates the fact that the pre-war system tended to take a presidential character. Indeed, the presidential race was a major source of competition and conflict because of the patronage system that the presidency entailed. As a result, the pre-war system (i.e., the electoral and governmental systems) induced intra-elite competition that threatened stability. Similarly, the 1958 crisis confirms Abukhalil's contention that a substantial amount of power was concentrated in the hands of the President. Indeed, President Chamoun, the second President serving in office after Khoury, who tried to undercut the power of traditional notables 'conveyed the impression that he would try to do what his predecessor had done a decade earlier (succeed himself)' (Hudson 1985b, 108). Such a move, coupled with the President's identification with the Western pact, ushered in instability and violence, mainly in terms of Muslim societal resentment and unrest. In both cases however (1952 and 1958), the fact that the confessional system allocated the post of the presidency to a Maronite meant that the race for the presidency took the form of an intra-Maronite competition, which impacted on stability for many reasons. Additionally, the 1952-1958 period (i.e., the Chamoun presidency) witnessed the support of the Sunni street for Nasserism, Sunni discontent with Chamoun's policies, and the latter's violation of the 1943 National Pact. Hence, the situation exploded into the 1958 war.

Indeed, with regard to this Muslim dissatisfaction with Maronite political predominance, Hudson writes that 'this complaint was an important cause of the 1958 civil war, and one of the results of that crisis was the equalizing of administrative and Cabinet post allocations between the two religions' (Hudson 1985b, 23). Indeed, after the conflict that broke out (in which there was external

involvement) was settled, the solution of this conflict allowed the Muslims to feel that they had somehow secured equality for their community. However, the detrimental impact this process had on the stability of the system (mainly the amount of casualties involved and foreign military involvement), suggests how consociationalism in operation failed on the promise of stability for Lebanon. In other words, the 1958 crisis clearly illustrates how the unwillingness of some elites (who are in a dominant position within society) to cooperate affects the stability of the whole country. Indeed, commenting on the 1958 crisis, Chalouhi argues that 'the cohesiveness and trust between members of the elite- essential for the effective operation of the system- was breaking down, as it became evident that Chamoun had no regard for elite cooperation and the need for compromise decisions' (Chalouhi 1978, 135-6). Chalouhi concludes that the 1958 conflict 'shook Lebanon's brand of consociationalism to its foundations. Practically, all of the basic tenets of consociationalism were broken' (Chalouhi 1978, 134). Hence, the procedural aspects of consociationalism suggest that consociational theory is based on optimistic assumptions.

In short, both the 1952 and the 1958 crises indicate that the President of the Republic in pre-war Lebanon was granted an amount of power that was not commensurate with the powers granted to the other top office holders or representatives of the remaining communal segments of Lebanese society. In the words of Lijphart, 'until the constitutional changes of 1989, the Presidency was by far the most powerful of the offices distributed among the ethnic groups' (Lijphart 1995a, 856). Nor was this amount of power commensurate with the demographic size of the Christian Maronite community, of which the President of the Republic was, and still is, the top office representative. Accordingly, both the 1952 and the 1958 crises can be considered two of the most serious manifestations of the failure of the consociational model to work as consociational theory suggests. For example, Chamoun's identification with the western pact and Muslim identification with Nasserism suggest how difficult it is for a common perception of threats and a common nation-building vision to emerge between groups under consociational structures of rule. Regional factors are seldom, as consociationalism suggests, perceived similarly between the communal groups, as threats to the stability of the system. Hence, the ability of consociationalism to sustain itself is often seriously challenged by regional factors. This has domestic repercussions that shake the stability of the country.

Having dealt with the procedural aspect of the grand coalition of pre-war Lebanese consociational politics and its impact on the stability of the system, the present discussion now turns to the procedural aspect of the consociational principle of proportional representation and its impact on the stability of the system. While some authors argue that the pre-war Lebanese system conformed

to the consociational principle of proportional representation,¹⁶ it should be made clear again in relation to this matter that the pre-war political system departed procedurally from the consociational model in this particular respect as it did not conform to the consociational principle of proportional representation that requires a fair representation of the segments. While the theory of consociational democracy does not specify exact quotas for the distribution of power (political representation, civil service appointments and allocation of public funds) among the different communities, the principle of proportionality, as defined by Lijphart, is 'especially important as a guarantee for the *fair* representation of minority segments'¹⁷ (Lijphart 1995b, 278).

It would be safe to assume that the system of proportional representation in practice was not fair to the different segments. The allocation of power was not proportionally representative of the constituents of Lebanese society, i.e. the various communal groups, in terms of their demographic strength. Rather, it reflected the strength of the influence and power that some traditional confessional notables enjoyed. As Chalouhi notes, 'internally, the principle of proportionality was being violated' (Chalouhi 1978, 137). In other words, representation of each sect was not commensurate with the demographic size of the sect. Rather, it was based on and reflected the politically dominant position of the Maronites. The violation of the principle of proportionality from 1943 to 1975 may be traced back to the departure of the 1943 National Pact from consociational principles in terms of proportionality, discussed above. First, a reminder of Picard's observation is noteworthy: 'isn't it significant that at the time when the pact was concluded, it gave preponderance to Christians over Muslims while the demographic equilibrium benefited the latter?' (Picard 1988, 119).¹⁸ Indeed, Khalaf's response is that 'the ratio agreed upon, 6:5 in favor of Christians, did not reflect demographic realities of the time' (Khalaf 2002, 286).

Second, over a span of thirty years, this misrepresentation was to have an extremely destabilising impact on the stability of the system. The first reason for this was that earlier efforts to redress this imbalance were ignored. Continuing demands by the Muslim communities for a greater share of power commensurate with their demographic strength were not met satisfactorily, and in particular, the amendments following the 1958 crisis did not meet adequately Muslim resentment. This ratio 'was always biased in favour of the Christian sects much to the chagrin of the Muslim community. Between 1943 and 1975, the Christian sector always rejected any demands for a more equitable distribution of seats' (Deegan 1993, 13). Additionally, 'Muslim demands for a new census, which were voiced already in the mid-1940s, only elicited Christian counterdemands that members of the

¹⁶ For such an account, see Heather Deegan, The Middle East and problems of democracy [Issues in Third World politics]. Buckingham: Open University Press, 1993, p.13 and p.104.

¹⁷ Emphasis added.

Lebanese diaspora living abroad - most of whom were said to be Christians - be counted as well, and the result was a mutual veto' (Horowitz 1985 cited by Barak 2000, 7).¹⁹

Moreover, this situation was further exacerbated by the changing demographic balance between the major Lebanese sects, exemplified in the significant increase of the demographic presence of the Muslim communities. As Faris puts it, 'as demographic changes radically altered the sectarian proportions of the Lebanese population, the 1926 arrangements for sectarian representation became outdated. Gradually, the sectarian political system became less fair and less representative; its legitimacy eroded as it held stubbornly to old formulas' (Faris 1994, 19). Similarly, Stoll argues as follows: 'The subsequent demographic shift of the Lebanese population undermined the stability of ethnic relations and was to have devastating results in 1975 when ethnic demands could no longer be resolved inside the consociational framework established in 1926' (Stoll 2000).

It would be simplistic to assume that demographic strengths are not be subject to change and that such a variation will not have a destabilising effect on the system. For instance, Tueni argues that 'the covenant, because of the laxity of the leadership responsible for implementing it, would prove especially impervious to the demographic and social changes visiting Lebanese society...' (Tueni 1993, 50). However, more important is McDowall's observation: 'it is questionable whether, even had these proportions remained static, the constitutional arrangements made could have withstood both external and internal pressures indefinitely' (McDowall 1986, 12).

Consequently, ' "Lebanon was governed by a consortia of interests and power brokers that reflected the composition of the political establishment but not necessarily the electoral" ' (McDowall quoted in Rigby 2000, 171). A fourth factor contributed to further exacerbate this inequity. As Kliot holds 'the distortion in parliamentary representation was the over-representation of the rural areas and the clear under-representation of the urban areas because of massive migration from the rural to the urban areas' (Kliot 1987, 65). A fifth impeding factor related to more or less significant waves of Christian migration outside the country carried a destabilising effect. In general terms, the Christian communities in Lebanon had a special disposition towards migration. Though there are no exact estimates, Christian migration outside Lebanon, especially within the Maronite community, was relatively more widespread than Muslim migration. At the end, the demographic reality 'remained so sensitive an issue that no government dared carry out another census. In short by the mid-sixties, most Lebanese recognized that the fine confessional balance in politics was based on a myth. It was

¹⁸ Translated from French.

¹⁹ Today, the situation is very much the same. See Section D.2. in Chapter 5.

inevitable that those who felt disadvantaged by the myth should begin to clamour for a fairer slice of the cake, though the political establishment was reluctant to listen' (McDowall 1986, 12).

Here, it is essential to stress the argument that 'consociationalism did not allow for a flexible representation that could accommodate demographic shifts and changes' (Chahine 1998, 172). Clearly, this violation finds its origins in the "laxity" of the signatories of the pact, to use Tueni's words. It is true that it was not remedied to because the pact 'contained no mechanism for the adjustment of the proportionality among the communities that were enshrined in it' (Doumit 1988, 232). However, as Picard observes, 'nothing was devised to adapt this power sharing to the country's demographic evolution' (Picard 1988, 119). In other words, not only was this a violation that the pact could not redress, but a deliberate disregard of the need to "fine-tune" proportional representation based on the new demographic reality. This disregard was possible because of the unequal power that the various communal groups enjoyed. The violation of the consociational principle of proportionality was one of the major factors leading to the breakdown of consociationalism and consensual elite behaviour in 1975 with the outbreak of the civil war.

In drawing on the pre-war Lebanese consociational model (1943-1975), Chalouhi points to the immobilisation of the decision-making process on important political issues. He finds that there was respect and toleration with regard to ideological and political differences when it came to issues that 'were not pressing' (Chalouhi 1978, 14). However, when it came to issues that could not be resolved, the author observes that they were 'usually frozen...and left unresolved' (Chalouhi 1978, 15). This policy of governmental avoidance when it comes to dealing with sensitive issues suggests that the model is incapable of working as the theory suggests, and prevents the components of the system of the consociational country from reaching political maturity. Indeed, this is best seen by looking at the behaviour of the elite in pre-war Lebanon, since the major institutional components of consociational theory are the elites.

In consociational democracies, the role played by the elite is a major determinant in the stability of the system. Consensual elite behaviour is a necessary condition for the creation and survival of a stable system. Put differently, 'in divided societies, political elites make up for the missing links between state and society' (Khazen 1993, 53). It may be said that Lebanon's pre-war elites played a two-fold role, i.e., a consensual accommodationist one as well as a confrontational adversarial one: 'the dual role played by Lebanon's political elites from independence in 1943 to the outbreak of war in 1975 constituted the basis of much of the political stability that the country enjoyed in non-crisis situations' (Khazen 1993, 53). A general point to be made is that pre-war traditional elites were able to compromise and maintain the relative stability of the system on relatively trivial

(i.e. non-vital) issues that did not prompt a significant accommodationist role, and that did not directly threaten the stability of the system. As regards political decision-making over highly salient political and economic issues that required substantial compromises in order to avoid crises and maintain the stability of the system, the performance of elites suggests that it is difficult for the consociational model to work as consociational theory suggests. More importantly, when the mutual interests and strategic alliances among the major players within the system stopped converging, the elites were no longer as committed to the stability of the system. In a sense, with no economic incentive to cooperate, there was insufficient motivation for the creating and maintaining of the political consensus and cooperation necessary for the system to be stable. This is not to say, however, that the main reason for the collapse of the pre-war consociational system rests solely on the role of the elites. Indeed, this thesis subscribes to Hudson's view that 'it would be wrong to blame the mishap wholly or even mainly on personal leadership failings. The consociational system itself- as the embodiment of a consociational model- was the root of the problem' (Hudson 1976, 114): the real causes 'were systemic: the Lebanese consociational solution was no longer adequate to the loads and demands of the present situation. The situation was beyond the rational management of the leaders' (Hudson 1976, 117). In other words, this thesis argues that it would be inadequate to blame solely the theory of consociational democracy or solely the Lebanese consociational system for the collapse of the system. This is because consociational theory, despite its inherently flawed assumptions, does not operate in a vacuum.

When it came to communal clashes, it should be noted that pre-war traditional elites attempted to solve conflicts that resulted from the outbreak of communal violence. Indeed, Denoeux, while commenting on the consensual behaviour of traditional leaders as prevailing in Beirut, makes the point that 'they strove to prevent sectarian feelings from degenerating into armed confrontations among members of the lower classes... Cooperation at the elite level was preserved and it usually proved effective in maintaining order and stability in the city' (Denoeux 1993, 79). Similarly, in the words of Chalouhi, 'there was a deliberate effort by the elite to stabilize the system as it was apparent that the alternative to this arrangement was intergroup strife' (Chalouhi 1978, 14). However, in this specific respect (communal hostility), a distinction should be made between traditional politicians and new sectarian leaders who attempted to rise to power.

For instance, the role played by new sectarian leaders conforms in many instances to the notion of elite-initiated conflict discussed in greater detail in Chapters 2 and 3. While commenting on consociationalism, Tsebelis notes the frequent situation where elites 'foment conflict along group lines in order to bolster their own bargaining position vis-à-vis other groups at the political center' (Tsebelis 1990 quoted in Sisk 1996). Indeed, a number of new elites attempted to manipulate (and

effectively did manipulate) communal identities in order to acquire a dominant position within the confessional system. Hence, when such divisive policies degenerated into communal violence and clashes, traditional elites sought to stabilise the situation, but could not always do so. Hence, this challenges the theory of consociational democracy in that respect (elite ability to maintain stability). As Dekmejian notes, 'the cartel politicians sought foreign support to defeat their opponents. The top politicians used unconstitutional means to defeat the opposition and the local zu'amas exacerbated intersectarian conflict for political ends' (Dekmejian 1978, 255). Hence intra-sectarian elite competition (between traditional elites and new sectarian leaders of the same sect) and the ensuing divisive confessional speech among them also point to the inability of the existing elites to maintain stability, despite efforts. This is illustrated through the efforts of the first two Presidents of the Republic to renew their mandate. This also challenges the assumptions of consociational theory, in that it suggests that traditional and "aware" elites can be sucked into a sectarian discourse to defeat their opponents (of the same sect). Indeed, both the 1952 and the 1958 crises illustrate the structural problem of the consociational system in terms of the flawed internal consistency of consociational theory which breaks down when the elites refuse to cooperate, when intra-elite competition produces a pattern of confrontational politics among and within the same sect and when regional factors and events challenge the ability of consociationalism to sustain itself.

For example, drawing on intra-elite behaviour, it may be said that elites did not develop proper mechanisms to counteract the destabilising effects of the struggle for power on the part of their clienteles and local zu'amas. As Denoeux argues, 'the elite cartel had little control over their henchmen and could not prevent them from fighting with other combatants at the expense of losing their leadership within their sect. Also, the willingness of some small zu'amas and militiamen to rise to top positions could not be prevented' (Dekmejian 1978, 256). At the same time, it should be noted that if pre-war elites managed many times to prevent the outbreak of full-scale communal conflict, they did not and in some instances, could not, promote consensus and cooperation among them. As Entelis remarks, 'over the years, Lebanese elites have demonstrated a remarkable capacity for minimizing inter-sectarian conflict although they have been less successful at sustaining, both formally and informally, inter-elite cooperation' (Entelis 1974, 3). For instance, some traditional elites had to adopt some ideological stances that would prevent them from losing their clientele. The recourse to an ideological rhetoric entailed a confrontational inter-elite relationship and communal hostility. Hence, traditional elites could not always seek to prevent communal clashes, as this meant losing their leadership position. In other words, it may be said that they did not always work at creating and maintaining a system of democratic stability. Hence, the allegedly positive (i.e. causative) relationship between consociationalism and democratic stability is questioned.

Accordingly, the elite could not cope with the demands being placed on the system, and this refutes Lijphart's contention that the elite is able to understand the dangers of a heterogeneous society. It is crucial to recapitulate on Lijphart's contentions concerning the role of the elite in consociational democracies. Consociational theory holds that provided the elite is able to both understand and neutralise the inherent dangers of a plural society, it can, if it wishes, play a central role in the creation and maintenance of a system capable of generating stable democracy. More specifically however, Lijphart holds that the elite *is* able to understand the dangers of a heterogeneous society.²⁰ Drawing on the above discussion of Lebanon, this contention is not always satisfied. The second voluntaristic stance rests in Lijphart's contention that 'politicians *can* change the course of a country if they so desire'.²¹ Drawing again on the Lebanese case, it is safe to say that other factors that come in play may sometimes counteract elite efforts in engineering consociational practices (such as the deteriorating regional situation in terms of the Arab-Israeli conflict and the influx of Palestinian refugees and Palestinian militias to Lebanon).

At the same time however, it is debatable whether elite cooperation would have remained coalescent had the regional situation been calm or calmer and/or had the economic situation been more favourable. By the early 1970s, it was obvious that the internal strains converging on the system were more than the latter could afford to absorb. This was further exacerbated by the destabilising constraints that the mobilisation of Lebanese society along sectarian lines placed on the system. This was in itself a result of the consociational structure of rule that fosters the manipulation of communal identity (especially when socio-economic conditions worsen). It may be said that consociational theory assumes that elites are more aware than non-elites of the fact that heterogeneous societies are prone to instability. However, consociational theory does not account for the fact that external players are often able to manipulate elites themselves, that such elites (supposedly the safeguards of the system) are prone to intra-elite instability and that, even if external manipulation is non-existent, the system itself that consociationalism puts in place makes it difficult for elites to cooperate and realise that their behaviour leads to societal and system instability. Denoeux, Khalidi and Khalaf describe such manifestations of consociationalism among elites as follows:

At times of crisis, sectarian or ethnic prejudices can always resurface at the elite level. This was shown in 1958, 1975-1976 and repeatedly ever since (Denoeux 1993, 107). If there is such a thing as learning the rules of the game...which enables leaders to acquire the knack of consensual politics in open but divided societies, there is also a process of unlearning these rules (Khalidi 1979, 97). The forces which motivate and sustain harmony, balance, and prosperity are also the very forces which on occasion pull the society apart and contribute to conflict, tension and civil disorder. The ties that bind, in other words, also unbind (Khalaf 1997b, 369).

²⁰ Emphasis added.

E. Consociational politics 1943-1975: manifestations of Lebanese society

Lebanese society has particularistic features. However, the impact of the conduct of consociational politics has been somehow detrimental to societal stability, and on system stability as a whole. In other words, consociational politics during the pre-war period have worked to exacerbate such particularistic features, rather than improving them. Political instability has had a significant impact on economic and social stability. Drawing on procedural manifestations, i.e., the features of pre-war Lebanese society, it would be difficult to say that consociationalism generates and maintains democratic stability. The following section will briefly address the particularistic features of Lebanese society and the impact of the conduct of consociational politics on the former, and hence on system stability.

1. Crosscutting cleavages/Communal consciousness and extreme pluralism

Perhaps most damaging to the stability of Lebanon is the class cleavage that pre-war Lebanese society suffered from. Indeed, socio-economic inequalities, were a major reason for the outbreak of the civil war, although they were somehow hidden under the confessional banner. For example, Suleiman points out that 'the emphasis on religious-ethnic divisions in the Lebanese society obscures the very clear fact that the Lebanese definitely constitute a class-divided society... In Lebanon, class tension has been "concealed" so to speak, buried under political-ideological issues and religious hostilities' and 'if there was no overriding politico-religious conflicts, economic issues would be the recognized "dividers" of the population' (Suleiman 1967, 275-6). Though it is generally acknowledged that the Christians were better off in terms of political and economic power²² than Muslims (particularly the Shi'a),²³ it is safe to say that socio-economic inequalities in pre-war Lebanese society cut across communal groups to a large extent. Indeed, Winslow points out that 'while much has been made of Lebanon's sectarian dilemmas, the special difficulty for Lebanese society has been the "double trouble" it engenders; class barriers run parallel to religious divisions' (Winslow 1996, 295). However, one manifestation of the extremely elitist pre-war structure of consociational politics was the successful way in which confessional elites (particularly new leaders who wanted to build a clientele to rise to power) manipulated communal identities and sectarian loyalties so as to prevent the emergence of a class-based movement that would challenge the existent system and the dominant position of these elites within this system. As a result, class cleavages manifested themselves in a religious and sectarian way. Hence, despite the fact that class

²¹ Emphasis added.

²² For example, see Rodney Wilson, *The economies of the Middle East*. London: MacMillan, 1979, p.165.

divisions cut across religious and sectarian groups, new leaders were able to channel class discontent along narrow sectarian lines. Indeed, this can be best seen by looking at the recent civil wars.²⁴ For recent examples as to the intra-sectarian character the civil wars took (for example Maronites fighting Maronites and Shi'a fighting Shi'a), numerous researchers note, alongside Collings, that 'prolific intrasectarian fighting...resulted in more deaths than intersectarian warfare' (Collings 1994b, 294).²⁵

Successive pre-war Lebanese consociational governments failed to deal satisfactorily with the socio-economic cleavages within society. As Salibi points out, 'successive regimes and governments left the development of the country to unbridled capitalist initiative.'²⁶ On the occasions when planning was implemented, private interests applied pressures to make the plans ineffective' (Salibi 1988, 190). Indeed, the material and economic resources available to the Lebanese state were channeled so as to satisfy the demands of the various elites and their close associates, hence the notorious clientelistic network. It should also be noted that one way for the elites to bypass addressing the socio-economic problem was to play on the sectarian and in some cases, intra-sectarian loyalties of the various communal groups as this, by the same token, allowed the elites to conduct their business interests free from mass involvement and protest, as the latter was fragmented along communal lines rather than class lines. Humphrey has remarked that 'one expression of the weakness of the Lebanese state was the pervasiveness of the clientelist system which helped to segment society along confessional and regional lines undermining the possibility of broader class movements' (Humphrey 1989, 14). Hence, the Lebanese state has been dominated by elites and clientelism.

As a result, its notorious weakness and reluctance to play even a minimal role in reducing socio-economic inequalities is readily apparent. Dekmejian notes that state performance in terms of economy and poverty alleviation was very poor. He provides examples of the tendency for bribery and a disregard for unemployment, compensation and social security problems (Dekmejian 1978,

²³ For Shi'i disenfranchisement, see Michael Walzer, On toleration. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1997, p.57.

²⁴ For similar comments relating to the religious character that the expression of socio-economic cleavages took, see Arild Schou, 'The breakdown of conflict management in Lebanon'. Bulletin of Peace Proposals (June), Vol.20, No.2, pp.193-204. London: Sage publications, 1989, p.200; Samir Khalaf, 'From a geography of fear to a culture of tolerance in Lebanon'. In Paul Salem, eds. Conflict resolution in the Arab World: selected essays, pp.354-83. Beirut: American University of Beirut, 1997b, p.360 and 361 and Ussama Makdisi, 'Reconstructing the nation-state: the modernity of sectarianism in Lebanon'. Middle East Report (July-September), No. 200, pp. 23-6, 1996, p.24.

²⁵ For instance, see Amine Gemayel, Le Liban: construire l'avenir. Paris: Hachette, 1992, p.39 and As'ad Abukhalil, The politics of sectarian ethnicity: segmentation in Lebanese society. Doctoral Thesis. USA: Georgetown University, 1988, p.274.

²⁶ Shehadi calls it a laissez-aller as well as a laissez-faire economic policy (Shehadi 1987, 8) and Hudson addresses it at length in Michael C. Hudson, 'The Lebanese crisis: the limits of consociational democracy'. Journal of Palestine Studies Vol.5, No.3-4, pp.109-22. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976, p.115.

257). Equally, Chalouhi cites that 'by and large, the government had neither the capability nor the desire to intervene in the economy' (Chalouhi 1978, 173). The reluctance of the state to play an active role in the economic life of the country can be traced back to the vision held by Chiha, a prominent banker who is the major writer and the leading interpreter of Lebanon's Constitution, often considered the father of the Lebanese Constitution (Abukhalil 1988, 61). Chiha's influential (though detrimental) vision of the state as a merchant Republic, which satisfied the interests of the few and was heavily dependant on the west, materialised in 1943 in the advent of independence. It can be summed up as follows:

Chiha argued that the state had little to do with the functioning of a healthy Lebanese economy (Gates 1998, 84). Economic liberalism...was part and parcel of an overall ideology which permeated the Lebanese political system. It was a consistent and general ideology best represented by the ideas of Michel Chiha...He was credited with being the first to mention that jobs in the state be divided along "confessional lines"...In matters of foreign policy and monetary questions as well as in those relating to the structure of the economy, the experience of the country seems to have followed a path that he had outlined (Shehadi 1987, 8).²⁷

A consequence of such a vision rests in the notorious weakness of the Lebanese state and its quasi-absent role in regulating the political economy of the country. Needless to say, such a vision of the state had its critics. Notably, Salibi referred to this merchant system "consortium rule", i.e., 'the alliance between a business oligarchy and politicians' (Shehadi 1987, 11) and Gates stressed that 'the development of Lebanon's economic order was greatly influenced by the material interests of its dominant elite', which 'broadly consisted of a socio-economic class of merchants and financiers and the politically and confessionally based *zu'amas*' (Gates 1998, 1). More importantly, 'Lebanon's power brokers placed a premium on a minimalist non-activist state with few interventionist powers' (Gates 1998, 84) and as a result, 'Lebanon's open service-oriented economy furthered the interests of the dominant elite but it was less successful in contributing to nation-building and to constructing a socio-economy that met the needs of the majority of the population' (Gates 1998, 150). Therefore, with the institutionalisation of a policy of minimal or non-existent state intervention, the state became a symbol of weakness and consequently was all the more reluctant and unable to intervene in the economic life of the country to redress or curb socio-economic inequality. Coupled with the many other cleavages (to which the discussion will now turn) that Lebanon suffers from, which in fact constitute significant forces in play in this plural society, it should be said that procedural manifestations of consociational rule did not conform to consociational theory. As such, they were unable to generate stability for the sort of society that the theory was designed for.

²⁷ For a recent commentary on Chiha's ideological vision of Lebanon and its impact on the Lebanese political system, see Fawwaz Traboulsi, *Silāt bila wasel: Michel Chiha wal ideologiya al Loubnaniya*. 'Interrupted links: Michel Chiha and the Lebanese ideology'. Beirut: Riad el-Rayyes books, 1999, Chapters 1 and 6.

Much has been written about strong parochial tendencies, the hierarchical family structure, the rigidity of blood, family and kinship ties, and the binding loyalty to the nuclear and extended family in Lebanese society. Comments have been made such as 'undoubtedly, it [the family] is the most important institution with which people identify' and the realisation that 'despite their [sectarian loyalties] importance to the Lebanese, sectarian loyalties do not supersede family ties' (Faour 1998, 63).²⁸ However, Khalaf, Khatib and Abul-Husn's treatment of blood ties (through the linking to politics that they establish), are the most notable contributions. Indeed, Khalaf argues that the pervasive pattern of blood ties 'has far-reaching implications for the political life of the country' (Khalaf 1987, 105). Khalaf remarks that 'in more than one respect, the whole political history of Lebanon, without undue exaggeration, can be described in terms of not more than a handful of leading families- families competing to reaffirm their name, power, and privilege in their respective regions...' (Khalaf 1987, 107). Indeed, political power was, and continues to be limited to traditional notables and leaders who are commonly regarded as Lebanon's spiritual families. Indeed, a prevalent feature of Lebanese political life is what Barakat and Khatib refer to as 'familism' and Khalaf calls 'inherited leadership' (Khatib 1994, 122). As Khatib observes, familism is common in both executive and legislative branches of government: 'By Western standards, this may seem peculiar but by Lebanese standards, anything else would be' (Khatib 1994, 135).²⁹ Similarly, Abul-Husn's treatment of Asabiya and particularly, the significant impact it has on elites, merits attention. Indeed, it may be said that as distinct from most writers on the topic, Abul-Husn cites the lack of awareness of some elites of the divisive impact of communal consciousness at the elite level. It may be seen that some elites are not immune to the divisive impact of communal consciousness, and remain unaware of its detrimental impact on the stability of society and intra-elite cooperation. While Abul-Husn argues that 'these tendencies are inevitable in pluralist societies', he also points out that the Lebanese system [in procedural terms, the Lebanese elites] did not develop the adaptive mechanisms and strategies necessary to contain destructive responses' (Abul-Husn 1998, 171). Thus, communal consciousness has had a significant impact on decision-makers and hence, the stability of the system as a whole. This brings the discussion to the consequences of acute communal consciousness at the elite level. From the above illustration, group consciousness may be seen to strike at both elite and mass levels. A general elite (especially the intra-sectarian elite) awareness was somewhat absent in pre-war Lebanon. In some ways, this

²⁸ For scholarly treatment of family and blood ties in Lebanon, see Caroline E.A. Knight, 'Traditional influences upon Lebanese politics'. Journal of Social, Political and Economic Studies (Fal-Win), Vol.17, No.3-4, pp.327-343. USA: Council for Social and Economic Studies, 1992, p.327; David McDowall, Lebanon: a conflict of minorities. Minority Rights Group International [Report]. London: Manchester Free Press, 1986, p.7 and Samir Khalaf, Lebanon's predicament. New York: Columbia University Press, 1987, pp.104-7.

²⁹ Khatib conducts an insightful survey of the inheritance of seats in Parliament, Prime Ministership and Cabinet from independence until 1994. For more details, see Hassan al-Khatib. (1994), The general factors for the collapse of democracy in Lebanon. Hassan al Khatib Eds and Halim Barakat, Lebanon in strife: student preludes to the civil war. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1977, p.191.

contributed to the breakdown of peaceful communal coexistence. Hence, it may be problematic to argue, alongside Lijphart, that the elite is aware of the dangers of heterogeneous societies. This is further exacerbated by the difficulty of 'overarching loyalties that counter-balance the centrifugal effects of segmental loyalties' to emerge under the consociational framework of rule, as assumed by Lijphart. Indeed, Lijphart assumes that such overarching loyalties can emerge under the consociational structure of rule. However, drawing on the procedural aspects of consociationalism, best seen by looking at the societal manifestations of the latter at the mass level, it is difficult for such loyalties to emerge, as Lijphart argues. Hence, this questions the successful operability of the consociational model versus consociational theory.

Finally, Khazen points out that 'in many plural societies, especially those with functioning democracies like Belgium and Switzerland, communal transformations have reached a significant degree of maturity. Conflicts are less generated by the emerging consciousness of supposedly quiescent groups than by occasional tensions caused by regional, political and cultural differences. These conflicts are either resolved or contained through the democratic process' (Khazen 2000, 33). In contrast, in most other deeply divided societies, especially recently established countries such as Lebanon for instance, in the process of creating democratic institutions, group consciousness is usually in the process of being defined, and therefore, tends to acquire an acute character. This makes it susceptible to inter-communal hostilities and tensions, even over minor issues of disagreement. Against this background, the successful operation/operability of the consociational model is further hindered, and hence its applicability or prescription to developing countries are questioned.

One further issue that should be addressed is consociationalism's advocacy of a relatively small number of segments (ideally between three and five) as a sustaining factor for the applicability of the model. In the case of pre-war Lebanon, there are many sub-communities, seventeen as a whole. This leads Khazen to state that while 'in most plural societies... two or three major groups are mobilised politically and are prone to conflict', 'Lebanon has a large number of communities that are politically active, some of whom have distinctly communal agendas' (Khazen 2000, 32). However, consociationalism purports to deliver on the promise of democratic stability for plural, i.e., deeply divided societies. Thus, it would be simplistic to assume that such societies will be made up of only three to five groups. In that case, it is difficult to determine where the dividing line between divided and deeply divided societies lies and useless to prescribe the consociational model for plural societies. Additionally, with the significant amount of segmental autonomy that consociationalism prescribes and encourages, this primary consociational principle will lead to the

emergence of distinctly communal agendas. Thus, the internal logic of consociational theory comes under question again.

Furthermore, consociational theory also advocates, alongside other background factors, the absence of a majority segment and segments of roughly the same size as helpful conditions for the establishment and maintenance of consociationalism. In this sense, pre-war Lebanese society conformed to the first but not to the second consociational condition. For example, Khazen points to the fact that in Lebanon, 'there is no numerically dominant group... Indeed no one group makes up more than 50 per cent of the total population' (Khazen 2000, 32). However, it may be argued that Lebanese groups are unequal in size in the light of Muslims demographic predominance. Against such a background, it appears that Lijphart's helpful conditions put strains on the applicability of the model, since it seems that these additional conditions he puts on the sort of society that consociationalism is supposed to operate successfully in, expect, in the final end, the plural society to be neither divided nor deeply divided. Indeed, Lijphart's consociational theory, in its attempt to deal satisfactorily with the governance of plural societies, does not take into account all the complex processes, factors and forces in play in such societies. Hence, the distinction between plural and non-plural loses much of its significance. Moreover, it seems more adequate to look at and bear in mind the power of each group in any attempt to devise a conflict-regulating mechanism for the governance of plural societies. Indeed, in terms of the procedural aspects of plural societies such as Lebanon, the relative power of each group, as set against its size, seems a more significant indicator of the sort of rule system that will result in that society. Indeed, while consociationalism purports to foster the preservation of political, social and economic rights of communal groups, this is not the case procedurally, looking at pre-war Lebanese society.

The rights of the communal groups were not catered for effectively and equally by the various communal leaders, precisely because they were unequal in power. Hence, this leads to a permanent fragmentation of the plural society, and casts doubt on the way the consociational model can generate and maintain democratic stability. In sum, both issues debated in the present discussion bring into mind Lijphart's own warning that neither separately nor jointly do the background conditions ensure the presence or success of consociationalism. Hence, the consociational model proves increasingly unable to deal with the particularistic features of plural societies, though the theory was originally devised and elaborated for that specific end, i.e., conflict-regulation and democratic stability in plural societies.

2. Lebanon's history and its artificial creation/Distrust and high interest in politics

The modern history of what was to become Greater Lebanon illustrates how the complex modernisation processes underway were unable to reduce the fragility of the Levant territories. For instance, Nagel points out that 'at least some of Lebanon's instabilities in the 1970s can be traced to the 19th century, when European powers cultivated relationships with individual sectarian groups as a means of gaining a foothold in the region' (Nagel 2002, 719). Corm, meanwhile, writes that 'the religious communities upon which the modern political existence of the country was built, belong, since centuries ago, to their own networks of politico-religious, regional and international powers' (Corm 1998a, 15).³⁰ Habib, too, elaborates on the ways in which, long before independence, various communities always sought outside intervention to buttress their local presence as follows:

The Maronites, for instance, welcomed the Crusaders in 1099 A.D., established a union with Rome in the course of the twelfth century, and sought French protection in 1860 (Steward and Suro 1984 quoted in Habib 1995). Similarly, the Shiites, the Druzes, the Orthodox and the Sunnis sought protection respectively from Persia, Britain, Russia and the Ottoman Empire. All communities compete to strengthen their positions in the Lebanese polity (Habib 1995).

Likewise, foreign powers have been said to intervene on behalf of the different communities to serve their own interests. As a result, the various communities did not succeed, at least at the time of independence, to establish the strong and common basis that would allow them to forge a peaceful communal coexistence among each other. Rather, mutual suspicion and communal (and even intra-sect) distrust were at the time of independence (and still until the present day) common features of Lebanese society. The Druze slaughter of significant numbers of Maronites during the Maronite peasant uprisings, for example, contributes to communal distrust. As Khatib put it, 'these memories help to explain the unusual cohesion and suspicious outlook of the communities today which makes the allegiance of the citizens not to the state but to their sects; the past continues to form much of the present' (Khatib 1994, 8). Hudson, too, writes that 'not only is there chronic suspicion between Christians and non-Christians; there is also incessant rivalry among the various sects within each of the two religions' (Hudson 1985b, 5): 'Mutual insecurity results in incessant competition for power- the scarcest and dearest value; political tension is the final product' and 'ethnic security is a higher-priority issue...[as]...every sect has memories of historical periods of subservience...' (Hudson 1985b, 22-23).

In 1920, the French authorities proclaimed Greater Lebanon, which comprised the inclusion of the coastal cities of Tripoli, Sidon, the Beka'a, Tyre and the city of Beirut to Mount Lebanon, a separate entity till then. This inclusion was undertaken without the consultation of the peoples of the

³⁰ Translated from French by this author.

area. Hence, when the French artificially created Greater Lebanon, it may be said that the latter, as a country, unified territory and state were very much 'a contested and unresolved issue' (Hauge 1997). Indeed, Lebanon, like most Middle Eastern countries is an artificial state with artificial boundaries. As Dekmejian observes, 'Lebanon exemplifies the tenuousness and artificiality of the nation-building process in the Middle East' (Dekmejian 1978, 363). Again, 'Lebanon is a case study in the porous, arbitrarily-drawn borders resulting from European imperialism [as] negotiations between Britain and France following World War I resulted in the inclusion of formerly Syrian territory occupied by Sunni Muslim Arabs in the French mandate' (Stoll 2000).³¹ For instance, Halpern comments that the creation by the French of Greater Lebanon 'was not in the interest of equity, but in order to enhance French economic and territorial power' (Halpern 1984, 136). Additionally, Khatib reveals that 'it took about ten years of the Lebanese Republic's existence before the Muslims started to reconcile themselves to the Lebanese political system' (Khatib 1994, 60). Furthermore, at the time of independence, the underlying reasons which brought the Lebanese together seem to have hinged on situational and temporary economic reasons, which proved to be an important short-term incentive that prompted political consensus among the leaders of the major communities over the need for independence. For example, Johnson reveals that the Sunnis 'saw independence not simply as a means for removing the hated French patrons of the Christians, but also as a change for expanding the opportunities of Muslims in the state bureaucracy and the economy' (Johnson 1986, 127). However, as the modernisation processes underway naturally altered the temporary strategic alliances among the major internal and external players, political compromise could not last long, when economic interest was lost and hence no longer an incentive to promote the former.

A direct consequence of the above-mentioned features of Lebanese society is that the consociational system of rule widened the gap between the different communities, thereby preventing the emergence of a strong unified basis that will encompass the state and society and hence, generate stability. This was manifested in the emergence of a whole range of differentiations between the segments of Lebanese society, most basic and notorious of which is 'a fundamental disagreement among Lebanese over the historicity of their country' (Habib 1995). Indeed, Abukhalil argues that 'what is important in Lebanese historiography is that there really is no such thing as "a Lebanese history"'. Instead, there are sectarian interpretations of the history of Lebanon that reflect the peculiar sectarian attitudes of Lebanese confessional communities towards the historical events that

³¹ Ghassan Tuéni (one of Lebanon's most distinguished statesmen and writers) however claims that 'contrary to popular belief, the present "natural" boundaries of the Republic- which were consecrated by the Versailles Conference and later by the League of Nations- were first drawn in December 1918 by the [Central] Administrative Council under Habib Pasha al-Sa'ad' (Tuéni 1993, 47). The author argues that these boundaries were later officially proclaimed by the French.

have shaped the formation of modern Lebanon' (Abukhalil 1988, 263-4). This lack of agreement as to the country's history and state-idea prevented the emergence of an "overarching loyalty", prescribed by Lijphart's model, which aim is to temper segmental loyalty within each community. Indeed, in such a situation, it is highly debatable whether consociational structures of governance can allow for the emergence of overarching loyalties. As will be argued later, this was to have a drastic effect on national identity and national integration, as well as state building. For instance, Beydoun notes that as early as the summer of 1919, the report of the King-Crane Commission (sent by the American President Woodrow Wilson) and the Yale supplement 'emphasized the dominance of sectarian differences in the formulation of political options' (Beydoun 1993, 16). With the advents of the artificial creation and independence of Lebanon, consociationalism furthered such sectarian differences.

For example, commenting on Lebanon's confessional confrontational setting in which 'any gain for one is perceived as a loss to the others, and increased security for one group is therefore an increased threat to others' (Haddad 1985, 10-1), Haddad argues that 'the lack of trust forces groups to redefine their objectives in very demanding terms and increases their rigidity' (Haddad 1985, 12). It can be expected that the manipulation of communal consciousness and the institutionalisation of sectarianism as a way of life (features that manifest themselves under the consociational structure of rule) would lead to feelings of suspicion among the different segments and naturally, affect the behaviour of their representatives. Consequently, it is clear that within such a hostile environment, peaceful coexistence between the different communities and democratic stability are difficult to achieve. Again, the emergence of an 'overarching loyalty', necessary to ensure a minimal degree of national entente and peaceful communal coexistence, was impossible in the light of mutual suspicion. Under such circumstances, the consociational model cannot be expected to procedurally bring about stability, especially when the pervasiveness of the sophisticated patron-client relationship makes politics a highly salient issue for most individuals. Indeed, it may be said that clientelism entails high interest in politics at the mass level, as the daily lives of individuals and of communal groups as a whole depend on their communal leader and how well and how much the latter can secure for his/her respective communal group or sect.

3. Political parties and clientelism/National disintegration

Compared to the substantial amount of political freedom and tolerance that pre-war Lebanon enjoyed and that the political system afforded, the experience of the country with political parties and their role in the political life of the country may be said to be deficient or as Sa'egh has

described it unachieved and incomplete (Sa'egh 2000, 124).³² From a historical perspective, different, and often contradictory parties and party ideologies were emerging in the Middle East and in the Arab world and were able to rally wide popular and class-based support around them. In this respect, the Lebanese experiment with political parties and party life was incomplete in comparison to the neighbouring countries. Indeed, Halpern's argument that it is significant 'Lebanon, which (between 1943 and 1975) had a number of ad hoc parties, had no party system' (Halpern 1984, 175) and Nasr's observation that 'party representation on the council's level is weak' (Nasr 1998) illustrate the above statements. It may be said that the structure of consociational, i.e., extremely elitist politics has prevented the emergence of secular, nationalistic and non-community based political parties and has equally prevented the contribution of existing parties to political life and to the lobbying for socially-centered issues. As Tachau observes, 'the domination of Lebanese politics by traditional blocs [kutal] led by zu'ama' has prevented organized or formal political parties from achieving significant development' (Tachau 1994, 300). At the same time, party leaders themselves have not been able to transcend narrow-based sectarian interests and rally wide popular support as a result of their sectarian and separatist agendas. For instance, Khatib observes that the existing parties are 'so indifferent to a bigger national existence that they can easily generate political separation... Neither politicians nor factions have been able to rise above their personal rivalries to tackle effectively the public affairs of the nation' (Khatib 1994, 118).³³ Political parties in Lebanon cater for specialised communal groups and are restricted in their own constituency, and are sometimes restricted to geographical areas. In other words, they actually contribute to the segmentation and permanent fragmentation of Lebanese society along sectarian lines, hence making it difficult for democratic stability to emerge. Indeed, it may be said that parties and their contribution to political life are one feature of democracy. As to the origins of such a situation, few people would disagree with the following contention that 'the sociopolitical structure of Lebanon opposes the formation of non-confessional political parties and encourages the establishment of local sectarian parties. The most powerful parties have no actual support or power except in certain regions. These are local parties' (Sleiman 1994, 84).³⁴ Additionally, the manipulation of the electoral law has hampered the development of strong wide based parties. For instance, Vocke remarks that 'the Lebanese voting system is not conducive to the formation of strong democratic parties' (Vocke 1978, 23). Again, the electoral system 'served to preserve the position of community notables (zu'ama) and to hinder the development of parliamentary political parties across communal and regional boundaries' (Rabinovich 1985, 25). As such, the consociational

³² Translated from Arabic.

³³ For similar comments, see Samir Khalaf, *Lebanon's predicament*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1987, p.102; David Gilmour, *Lebanon: the fractured country*. London: Sphere Books, 1987, p.38 and Nazih Richani, *Dilemmas of democracy and political parties in sectarian societies: the case of the Progressive Socialist Party of Lebanon 1949-1996*. London: Mc Millan Press, 1998, p.142.

structure of rule, with its emphasis on elitist politics, may be said to further the continuation of the status quo and hamper changes that political parties are likely to generate in democracies. As one author put it, 'in so far as representation was based on religious grounds, there was little incentive to establish cross-confessional ideological parties' (Rigby 2000, 171). In short, the manipulation of communal consciousness did not only hinder the development of strong democratic parties with popular support. It also restricted the development of secular parties with secular agendas and significantly reduced popular allegiance and membership of political parties. In cases where some parties enjoyed some limited degree of popular support, this was as a result of party leaders having appealed to religious feelings in order to rally communal support.

Substitutes for the weakness of state institutions and to the absence of effective political parties with socially centered agendas (rather than the existing elite or actor centered ones) in Lebanon took the form of a notorious and sophisticated patron-client network. Before addressing clientelism in Lebanon, a few words should be said about administrative modernisation in a weak state with archaic and underdeveloped institutions subject to political intervention. Doumit argues that the four components or characteristics of consociational democracy, that is, grand coalition, mutual veto, segmental autonomy and proportionality, 'have quite profound consequences for the kind of bureaucracy that is likely to serve such a society' (Doumit 1988, 16): 'Consociationalism proved a crippling restriction on administrative modernisation, in response to changing social needs and improved technology' (Doumit 1988, 235). Here, it should be pointed to the central role of the elites in consociational democracies, for it is almost solely in their capacity to induce changes in state administration. As Chalouhi aptly put it, 'planning as an instrument of modernization can only be as effective as the political leaders permit it to be' (Chalouhi 1978, 174).

In the light of 'the inability or unwillingness of successive Lebanese leaders to build up the institutions of the state' (Denoeux 1993, 83), it is most probable that the elite is largely held accountable for the archaic character that the Lebanese administration exhibited. Indeed, the constant political intervention of elites in state administration to protect their clients and nurture/perpetuate the patron-client network has prevented much-needed change towards accountability, transparency and efficiency of state institutions. As such, pre-war consociationalism proved yet again incapable of accommodating change and hence, generating stability. Indeed, the notorious patron-client network illustrates the difficulties for secular political parties to emerge and for state institutions to be developed efficiently under consociationalism. Though clientelism can take many forms, a basic definition of the patron-client relationship is as follows: 'the clientelist

³⁴ Translated from French.

system of social control entails the exchange of loyalty for patronage: the client upholds his patron by providing his support and in return receives his patron's assistance and protection' (Khatib 1994, 75). However, to understand the phenomenon of clientelism in Lebanon, it is useful to look at it from a historical and comparative context, as patron-client networks have played an important role since before the creation of independent Lebanon and have had stabilising as well as destabilising effects on the conduct of politics. Hamzeh argues that the confessional distribution of the 1861 *Règlement Organique* of the Governorate and 'the absorption of prominent families generated conditions conducive to the emergence of the Lebanese political system, where both clientalism and confessionalism have become institutionalised into the system' (Hamzeh 2001, 170). More importantly, Poole establishes a direct link between consociationalism and clientelism by stressing the 'way in which an elite cartel can emerge...[and] then become adept at representing the particularistic interest of individuals, families and clans as well as facilitating an efficient vehicle for patron-clientelism based on the exchange of favours for votes' (Poole 1991 quoted in Deegan 1996, 57).³⁵ Indeed, Poole's observations best fit the description of the manifestations of the Lebanese clientelistic system, especially when it comes to the representation of family and clan interests, namely the few spiritual families of Lebanon that are running the country and competing among each other for power. Needless to say, the dominance of the patron-client system, one of the features of the Lebanese consociational political system, has meant that state institutions were left underdeveloped, inefficient and that citizens had to depend on their communal representatives for jobs and services that the state should normally provide. As such, the procedural aspects of the consociational model seem to suggest that the Lebanese political system can hardly reach political maturity and hence, its ability to generate democratic stability is questioned.

Under such conditions that indirectly promote societal fragmentation, it is difficult for national, ideological and territorial integration to emerge. Such integration is necessary to allow the creation and maintenance of stability within democratic practices. Indeed, the manifestations that pre-war Lebanese society exhibited clearly suggest that the consociational system procedurally works in different ways than the theory suggests. For instance, national disintegration was a main feature of the system. For example, Shils writes that Lebanese society 'is not an integrated civil society in the modern sense of the term' pointing out that 'this situation would not have such marked significance for Lebanese society if it were confined to the mass of the population...Much more important is the incivility of many of the members of the elite, the members of the great families, the *zu'ama* who

³⁵ For detailed accounts of the Lebanese clientelistic system, see Tom Najem, *The Collapse and Reconstruction of Lebanon*. University of Durham: Centre for Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies- Durham Middle East Paper 59. http://www.dur.ac.uk/~dme0www/dmep_p5.htm, 1998. [website visited in November 2002] and Arild Schou, 'The breakdown of conflict management in Lebanon'. *Bulletin of Peace Proposals* (June), Vol.20, No.2, pp.193-204. London: Sage publications, 1989, pp.196-7.

dominate and speak for the primordial and religious communities' (Shils 1966, 2). Indeed, Shils' comments make it clear that elites are not immune from the divisive impact communal consciousness can have on efforts at integration. Hence, it may be said that neither national popular integration nor elite integration/cooperation are easy to achieve under consociational structures of rule. While the artificial creation of Greater Lebanon cannot be expected to lead to the emergence of a unifying feeling, the institutionalisation of confessionalism and sectarianism contributed to the fragility of the country. In the words of Salibi, 'to create a country is one thing; to create a nationality is another' (Salibi 1988, 19).³⁶ On the contrary, it may be said that the sudden inclusions of a territory occupied by Muslim Sunnis, another occupied by Muslim Chi'ites, a third by Christian Orthodox to Mount Lebanon occupied by Christian Maronites would make national identity difficult to infuse, especially in the light of the mutual fears and suspicions among such communities. In this respect, it is useful to look at the observations of Hobsbawm and Salamé who stresses as follows:

Nationalism comes before nations. Nations do not make states and nationalisms but the other way around". Peoples first seek togetherness and then translate it into geographical terms, surrounding themselves with borders. Lebanon's predicament was that it attempted to induce nationalism without having adjusted to the necessities of the modern state (Salamé 1993, 3).

Indeed, Laakso writes that 'it was mainly economic factors that made the Sunnite population support the new Lebanon' (Laakso 1989, 181). Hence, the manifestation of Lebanese unity at the time of independence should not be regarded as an expression of what Lijphart calls an "overarching loyalty". As Salamé aptly observes, 'the meaning of Lebanese independence' which should have cast a unifying feeling among the Lebanese and over which there should be no disagreement, 'is always highly political' (Salamé 1993, 4). In other words, it has a connotation of politically salient issues, which are in fact economic issues relating to power, interests and a community's position in society. Additionally, the failure of the state to deal with socially-centered issues, i.e., the Muslim (especially the Shi'a) economically subordinate position within society was to have a detrimental impact on the stability of the system. As Salibi argues, 'the fact that the Republic's administration, during the first decade of independence, failed to provide effective remedies for social ills which afflicted Moslems more than Christians did not encourage the Moslem loyalty to the country nor did it help Moslems to forget other loyalties' (Salibi 1966, 212). Hence, while consociational theory assumes its ability to protect and preserve the political, social and economic rights of the various communal groups, the applicability of the model to the Lebanese case suggests that procedurally, the consociational arrangement that will result out of the effort of

³⁶ For an elaboration of the artificial creation of Lebanon and Syria and the different understandings of Lebanese identity that the various communal groups had, see Kamal Salibi, A house of many mansions: the history of Lebanon reconsidered. London: I.B. Tauris, 1988, pp.27-30.

the various communal leaders to organise their relationship within a society will reflect the dominant position of some groups at the expense of others in society, rather than having an equitable character. Hence, consociationalism seems unable to deliver on the promise of democratic stability for Lebanon's plural society.

Khazen mentions the absent role of the state in reinforcing national integration (Khazen 1987, 116). Indeed, the present discussion has already pointed to the absence of the state in dealing effectively with the vital issues and interests of the polity and society. As such, its role in promoting national integration is naturally non-existent. Similarly, Chahine argues that consociationalism in Lebanon 'discouraged the emergence of a single national identity' (Chahine 1998, 172), hence making it problematic to expect, as Lijphart does, the ability of the consociational model to induce an overarching loyalty or what the author calls moderate nationalism.

4. State weaknesses/the external environment

While the inability and unwillingness of the state, that is, the successive governments, to regulate the political economy of the country along socially-centered lines (and rather opted to play on sectarian identities) were addressed before, the present discussion will focus on the minimal role of the state in using force when necessary and its subsequent failure to impose its presence, authority and maintain its legitimacy. Kliot writes that Lebanon's 'fragile state idea collapsed easily in times of crisis' (Kliot 1987, 54-7). Indeed, and as Gates elaborates on this idea, the minimalist state apparatus that the leadership established 'was often immobilised by small challenges as well as major crises' (Gates 1998, 84-5). The priority accorded by the pre-war Lebanese political system allocated to sectarianism and confessionalism at the expense of the development of state institutions (independent from political intervention) were detrimental to the emergence of a strong state and as such prevented the state from using force when needed and from insulating the country from external manipulation, intervention and external turbulence (except maybe for the Chihabist period). Accordingly, it would be inadequate to argue along the lines of Abukhalil who blames in this specific respect the extreme pluralism that Lebanese society exhibits. Indeed, Abukhalil writes that 'the richness of sectarian diversity subordinated the power of the state', in turn making it 'unable in Lebanon to be more powerful than society' (Abukhalil 1988, 91). Rather, the argument of the present discussion is that many heterogeneous societies exhibit a "rich sectarian diversity" without this making the state weak. Indeed, consociationalism, in terms of the primacy it allocates to the institutionalisation of confessionalism and sectarianism, makes it difficult, though not impossible, for a strong state to emerge.

For example, Dekmejian draws a more accurate picture, indicating that if circumscribed state power is 'needed to allow subcultural autonomy' under the consociational framework, 'this reluctance or inability of the state to use force is a major system weakness' (Dekmejian 1978, 257). Dekmejian distinguishes between the delegation of as much decision-making as possible to the separate segments and the requirements for an internally stable situation, necessary to maintain a peaceful coexistence. Indeed, the Lebanese case demonstrates the extent to which the delegation of a significant amount of decision-making to the separate segments endangered the stability of the system state and society alike. More importantly, the ways in which segmental autonomy operated in Lebanon is in conformity with consociational theory, which prescribes the delegation of as much decision-making as possible to the segments. This appears to be done at the expense of peaceful communal coexistence and internal stability. As Hudson argues, 'the parochial divisions in Lebanon's political culture 'make the state highly vulnerable to foreign manipulation' (Hudson 1985b, 116). As Lijphart comments, 'several of the background conditions were not favorable in Lebanon: foreign threats reinforced rather than weakened internal divisions' (Lijphart 1995a, 859).

Against this background, it would be difficult to argue, alongside Lijphart, that foreign threats (that are perceived as a common danger) are a sustaining factor for consociationalism, as the latter fosters a system whereby foreign threats are more often than not a function of communal rather than national perception (which is difficult to come about). The recent civil war is an example since the causes of the war being partly an interpenetration of a number of internal and external factors. Additionally, there was, and continues to be, a consensus within Lebanon that a change to the confessional system needs to occur. However, it is not readily apparent how such a change is to come about. If the situation continues to remain as it is, communal groups will continue to seek linkages to buttress their positions in the confessional system, hence bringing the outside, in terms of external manipulation, intervention, as well as permeability of the country's borders to regional turbulence.

It may be that the role that external, international and regional powers alike, played before and during the civil war in Lebanon is one of the most debatable issues when discussing consociational politics in the country. The contradictory aspects of the National Pact, which conforms to consociational understandings, inhibited clear foreign policy orientations and generally put constraints on attempts to neutralise and insulate the country from external interventions and threats. As Chahine notes, a drawback of consociationalism in Lebanon is that under the consociational framework, 'foreign policy too was conducted at the sectarian level' (Chahine 1998, 172). Similarly, Khazen reveals, while commenting on the Lebanese communities, that 'differences among communities involve not only domestic issues as in the case of other divided societies, but

also foreign policy and regional politics' (Khazen 2000, 32). As mentioned earlier, this was a result of the lack of a clear foreign policy orientation and the double identity of Lebanon, stated in the pact. In short, 'Lebanon's independence, based on the 1943 National Pact, did little to halt foreign intervention' (Abukhalil 1994, 123), hence constituting a sustaining factor for the outbreak of the civil war.

Additionally, the structure of consociational rule makes the emergence of a feeling of national identity difficult, which in return invites foreign intervention. Indeed, the lack of a feeling of national identity among the Lebanese can be viewed one of the major factors that facilitated outside intervention. For instance, Khalifah makes the point that 'the outside armed presence in Lebanon, i.e., the Palestinian, Syrian, and Israeli presence, as well as the continuous political and military interference by the superpowers, has been invited and cheered at different times by different Lebanese groups and sects' (Khalifah 1997, 1). Hence, this is a clear indication of the processes in which the consociational structure of rule fails to keep the masses and even the elites in many instances aware of the external dangers that threaten the stability of the system. It may be said that elites are just as the masses not immune from manipulation. As a result, the procedural aspects of consociationalism seem to suggest that democratic stability cannot easily come about. Similarly, Lebanon's weakness in terms of its geographical location and its small size has made the country somehow unable to make independent policies. Hudson for instance, notes in this respect that 'Lebanon has always been internally weak and thus unusually dependent upon external patrons' (Hudson 1994, 138) and Messarra, who defends Lijphart's line of thought, admits that the inability of consociationalism to resist external pressures is compounded by Lebanon's inability to exert any control over changes occurring in its regional environments. In short, outside intervention is facilitated by a number of internal reasons pertaining to the particular nature of Lebanese society, such as its size and the country's geographical characteristics. However, the lack of a clear state policy, as well as the tendency of communal leaders to seek outside support, both features of consociational structures of rule make it unclear what constitutes outside arbitration versus detrimental intervention, it being a perception that depends on sectarian preferences, and hence, in the final end, this situation does not make it easy for stability to emerge.

F. Recapitulation: pre-war consociationalism and democratic stability

Numerous studies have specifically addressed in great detail the reasons/origins of the outbreak of the Lebanese civil war in 1975, the chronological narrations of the events that led to the war and the various stages of the 1975-1990 Lebanese war. Thus, it is more adequate for the purposes of this thesis, which mainly deals with the allegedly positive relationship between consociationalism and

democratic stability, to explain how these external, as well as internal reasons for the outbreak of the war reveal the weaknesses in the internal logic of the consociational theory of democracy, therefore making the consociational model unable at times to function properly in generating stability. In other words, this thesis reveals how expressly optimistic consociational theory is in assuming consociationalism can prevent instability and expecting it to deliver stability. As regards the origins/causes of the war, this thesis sticks to the view that the interpenetration of internal and external events caused the collapse of the system.³⁷

Notably here, one should mention the turbulent regional Arab-Israeli conflict, Palestinian military activism on the Lebanese-Israeli border and the intervention of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (hereafter PLO) and other Palestinian militias in Lebanese politics, since the detrimental impact of such events on the local Lebanese scene reveals how consociationalism can be seriously challenged in its ability to sustain itself in the face of regional factors that can be expected to have domestic repercussions. Hence, this challenges the optimistic assumptions of consociational theory, which assume that foreign threats can be commonly perceived (by the various communal groups) as dangers to the internal stability of the country. Indeed, Lebanon became deeply involved in the Arab-Israeli conflict, with Palestinian military activism against Israel initiated from Lebanese territory and with Palestinian involvement in the Lebanese conflict. Such involvement was an important cause for the outbreak of the civil war, as it constituted an additional burden on the operability of the pre-war Lebanese consociational formula since the Palestinian community (the PLO, militias as well as refugees) were not part of the Lebanese consociational structure of governance (which already faces difficulties in organising power and rule among the various Lebanese communal groups). Though Lijphart's consociational theory assumes that foreign threats, which are perceived as a common danger, assist consociational mechanisms of rule, this is not the case in practice. This perception is often the result of sectarian perception rather than national interest, as an awareness of national interest is difficult to achieve under consociationalism. Muslim support for the Palestinian cause, as opposed to Christian perception of it as a danger to Lebanon and its stability, best illustrates how difficult it is for a common, unified perception of national interest to emerge under consociational structures of rule. Hence, this questions the internal logic of consociational theory.

Palestinian involvement in the war since its beginning exacerbated the nature of the conflict because the Christian blocs perceived Muslim Sunni Palestinian armed presence in Lebanon, namely the

³⁷ For a very concise but explanatory account of the reasons for the outbreak of the war, see James Bill and Robert Springborg, *Politics and the Middle East* [5th edition]. New York/Harlow: Longman [The Longman series in comparative politics- Country studies], 2000, p.100.

Palestinian Liberation Organisation, as a direct threat to Christian existence while the Muslim Sunnis widely supported the Palestinian cause, a support which may be said to be predicated on common religious sectarian affiliation. For instance, Lebanese Shi'i support for the Palestinian Sunni cause was far less pronounced than Lebanese Sunni one, as Palestinian-Shi'i fighting suggests. Hence, under consociational structures of rule, the permanent fragmentation of society along sectarian lines suggests that communal groups tend to aggregate along similar and very narrow identities, which do not only take into account religious affiliation, but also give precedence to sectarian ones, hence making the society deeply divided.

Regarding the internal causes of the war (mentioned at varying stages of this chapter), it is most important to point to the detrimental impact that new politicians can have on the stability of the system when they channel discontent along sectarian lines to attempt to rise to power and replace old accommodating elites. Equally important here is the inability of traditional elites to avoid being sucked into the sectarian discourse, despite traditions of elite consensus and cooperation. Additionally, and also very importantly, it should be mentioned that traditional elites, despite their willingness most of the time to prevent sectarian fighting and sectarian discourse, were unable to contain their clienteles (sometimes simply out of fear of losing their position and other times as a result of ideological mass mobilisation, such as Sunni support for Nasserism). Furthermore, such traditional elites were unable at many times, to control their henchmen, who engaged in sectarian squabbling with other henchmen from other communal groupings (many times in order to rise to power). Finally in terms of elite behaviour, it is very important to mention the detrimental impact that intra-elite competition had on the stability of the system. Indeed, intra-sectarian elite competition can be said to have been more detrimental to the stability of the system, than inter-sectarian elite behaviour, which tended to take the shape of a consensual relationship. It suffices to say that such procedural manifestations of elite behaviour points to the optimistic expectations of the theory of consociational democracy with regards to elite consensus and cooperation.

Furthermore, it is crucial to mention that the class cleavages that pre-war Lebanon manifested suggested latent social instability. Namely, one can cite the poverty belt around Beirut, with the influx of Shi'is from the South of Lebanon. Their exclusion from the Southern patronage system and their inability to benefit from the Beiruti patronage system has had a detrimental impact on the stability of the system when they were radicalised by the fall of the Chihabist reform program of social justice. While other factors causing the war may also be cited, it is sufficient to deal in the present thesis with the most important factors that reveal the internal weaknesses of consociational theory and highlight the fact that the model does not always procedurally function as the theory suggests. In other words, such factors are useful for the purposes of this thesis only insofar as they

serve to invalidate the supposedly positive relationship between consociationalism and democratic stability. The inability of the pre-war consociational model of rule to generate democratic stability is a sufficient illustration that consociational theory sometimes fails to deliver on the promise of democratic stability. Hence, the last paragraphs of this section will provide a retrospective account of the nature of the main consociational elements and structures of rule in pre-war Lebanon and will assess their significance regarding their inability to generate stability. In the end, the chapter will briefly mention the various stages of the 1975-1990 civil war.

As regards the role of the Lebanese Parliament in the political life of the country, as early as 1969, Hudson noted that 'the systemic function of the modern Lebanese Parliament is not to promote democratic values (although it does so to a significant extent) but to keep autonomous elements satisfied' (Hudson 1969, 251): 'the object of every player is to make small gains without upsetting the structural balance. As a result, the political situation seems to be changing constantly, yet very little really happens' (Hudson 1969, 251-2).³⁸ Hudson's comments point to the ineffectiveness of the Lebanese Parliament in inducing change in the political system. It may be argued that such a situation can be traced back to the static nature of the pre-war consociational model and its rigidity. As a result, change, along other lines that reflected the modernisation process underway in Lebanon after 1943, could not be accommodated by the rigid political system. Hence, when the situation on the ground no longer reflected the dimensions of the 1943 pact, the consociational system broke down.

In all constitutional arrangements (which also include informal agreement like pacts as they are incorporated in the constitution upon their conclusion), there should be an agreed way of accommodating change peacefully within the political system. For example Friedrich argues that a system 'which lacks arrangements for its change will become disorderly in time' (Friedrich 1963, 342). In other words, the aim is to solve politically salient problems without resorting to violence. Against this background, Abukhalil's observation that the pact 'was destined to fail, as it lacked a mechanism for conflict resolution' (Abukhalil 1988, 72) is particularly relevant. Indeed, it may be said that the inability of the consociational pact to reflect and accommodate the changes occurring within Lebanese society resulted in the collapse of the consociational structure of rule and the outbreak of the civil war. Similarly, Doumit observes that 'it is during a crisis that a political system shows its robustness or resilience. When Lebanese consociationalism was eventually brought to the test, it simply disintegrated into the deeply divided society it always was' (Doumit 1988, 233).

³⁸ For similar accounts, see Sue M. Halpern, Consociational democracy and the dangers of politics as science. Doctoral Thesis. Oxford: University of Oxford, 1986, pp.76-7 and p.358.

McGarry, meanwhile, also comments that 'successive generations of political leaders must be motivated to engage in conflict regulation and sustain the consociational system. The leaders of the rival ethnic communities must fear the consequences of protracted ethnic war and desire to preserve the economic and political stability of their regions' (McGarry 1994). McGarry's observations point to the temporary of the pact, which was built on alliances of interests. Hence, when the economic situation prevailing on the ground stopped being an incentive strong enough to promote elite cooperation, elite political consensus over the need to preserve the stability of the system was reduced. It should be noted that the highly, extremely elitist character of Lebanon's pre-war consociational grand coalition and the procedural aspects this narrow based coalition took had a significant impact on the stability of the system. This is because the exclusion of communal groups from power and the political, economic and social inequality it entailed were more than the system could endure. In this respect, consociationalism's substitution of effective institutions of governance by communal leaders and institutionalised confessional formulas of representation is a major hindrance to the creation of stability. As Ahmed and Tindigarukayo put it:

Lebanon did not develop its institutions, and hence they do not reflect the real Lebanese community. Furthermore, these institutional bodies being a matter of shape and not of substance, opened the door wide to an unlimited crisis (Ahmed 1986, 101). Lebanon has the form of a state but lacks effective state institutions, because of the absence of the infrastructure that goes into the making of a nation (Ahmed 1986, 102). In most post-colonial states, however, political regimes are primarily personal and discretionary rather than institutional and procedural. That is, neither the behaviour of political leaders nor the entire political conduct in these states is governed by impersonal institutional rules. Instead, they are governed by personal authorities and power (Tindigarukayo 1989, 53).

Indeed, the real Lebanese institutions of governance under the existing pre-war consociational structure of rule were the elites. As they are human institutions, they are not always able or willing to preserve the stability of the system and create a system of governance that would generate democratic stability, hence questioning the internal logic of consociational theory.

The war events (1975-1990) meant the breakdown of law and order as there was no system, (consociational or otherwise), in place. However, they changed the balance of power among the various warring factions, hence suggesting the nature of the consociational compromise that would emerge in the end. Effectively, the fifteen-year civil war started in 1975 with a deteriorating economic situation that threatened social stability, clashes between the Lebanese army and the PLO and a violent conflict between the Maronites and the Palestinians. The Maronite president of the Lebanese republic requested Syrian support to counterattack Palestinian military activism against the Maronite faction. Syria, to protect its borders and the Maronites from Muslim attack, intervened by sending its troops into Lebanon in order to stabilise the Lebanese front as an unstable Lebanon meant a likely (and in fact eventual) Israeli invasion into Lebanon that may well have spill-over

effects on Syrian stability. Inter as well as intra-sectarian fighting and ethnic decimation continued, suggesting as Johnson points out, that the long Lebanese war was not only about class cleavages. Indeed, Johnson writes that class differences 'cannot on their own be used to explain how a class struggle over socio-economic conditions became a war' (Johnson 2001, 197). Indeed, the horrific nature of intra-sectarian fighting, violence and killing lend support to this argument and point to the salient impact of ethnicity on system stability and the important role it played in the war events. The Maronite-backed Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982 created a new set of alliances. Israel's ability to neutralise and expel the PLO (to Tunisia) left the Sunni militias in a much weaker position. However, the inability of Israel to establish a government of its own in Beirut and its subsequent withdrawal in 1983 meant that the Maronites' position was weakened and suggested that they had, in a way, lost the war, though there is no ultimate winner or loser in the Lebanese civil wars. Violence, decimation, kidnappings and killings continued, and were fuelled by and linked to proxy wars (the cold war, the Iraq/Iran war...). Intra-sectarian fighting and killings centered also around economically salient strategic points such as the Beirut airport, the ports along the coastal cities, the drugs and arms traffic. This was demonstrated by the looting that took place and the attempts by sectarian new leaders (who became the warlords of the Second Republic) to regionally/locally control the war economy became commonplace. The multi-national force sent in 1982 composed of the U.S., France, Britain and Italy) left Lebanon in 1984 and the various Shi'i militias (such as Amal and Hizbollah) started gaining control over various areas in South Lebanon and Beirut. Hence, this suggested that the formula that would end the war would have to take into account the relative power and position of the Shi'i Muslims, hence putting an end to the Maronite-Sunni dominant position on the Lebanese political scene. Indeed, the role of the Shi'i Muslims in the later years of the war events pointed to the changing balance of power among the various contending groups, with a weakening of the previously dominant political position of the Maronites. Alongside the war events, numerous peace-making efforts were conducted (discussed in the Chapter 5) and their minutes can be considered a reflection of the warring situation on the ground. In other words, such efforts reflected the changing balance of power and hinted to the nature of the agreement that would end the war in two ways. First, they reflected that the nature of the formula that would be able to end of the war may well be a consociational one. Second, they reflected the scope and content of this formula, i.e., the dominant position of some new groups versus others, as a result of the changing balance of power (itself a result of the fighting events). In 1990, Syria ended the war and imposed peace. With the help of Syrian troops, law and order started to be restored and a revised consociational formula, that reflected the new changing realities on the ground (military, economic, demographic, communal), was put into place.

To sum up, the conflicts in Lebanon have shown that the pre-war consociational practices in Lebanon were a failure. This is because they did not generate democratic stability, and hence questioned the supposedly causative relationship between consociationalism and democratic stability. The literature on consociational theory and Lebanon has raised questions concerning the ability of the consociational model to generate and maintain democratic stability in multi-communal and unstable states. At the same time however, the particular balance of internal and external forces in 1989 led to a strategy that resulted in a consociational proposal for a possible solution that effectively brought the war to an end. The new formula came as a response to meet regionally turbulent conditions of crisis and internally new economic, social, demographic and political realities. Despite many other conflict-regulation attempts, it was the only one that all parties involved considered to be acceptable. Indeed, the new arrangement re-affirmed and strengthened the consociational aspect of the country. This gives credibility to consociational theory, in that consociationalism tends to be resorted to as a result of temporary conditions of crisis, but at the same time indicates the necessity to examine the new consociational formula. Chapter 5 will explain the revised consociational arrangement, examine the conduct of politics in the post-war era and the features that post-war Lebanese society exhibits. It will also attempt to draw conclusions concerning the ability of the new revised model to generate prospects for democratic stability for post-war Lebanon.

Chapter 5 Consociationalism and the post-war Lebanese political system

In post-war Lebanon, the various communal groups are of unequal size and power. The adjusted consociational mechanism of rule introduced salutary reforms (through the Ta'if Agreement), intended to lead to a viable system of governance able to create and generate democratic stability. While this chapter addresses in great detail the Ta'if Agreement, it suffices to start the discussion by mentioning that it gives more powers to the Sunni prime minister and the Shi'i speaker. As a result, Lebanon is now ruled by a triumvirate composed of the Maronite president, the Sunni premier and the Shi'i speaker, who represent, together, the three largest communal groups. Additionally, the enlarged parliament now guarantees an equal fifty-fifty percent ratio of representation between Christians and Muslims, instead of the pre-war six to five ratio favouring Christians. Equally important however for the purposes of this chapter is the context of the Ta'if Accord (i.e., the local and regional contexts as well as mediation efforts and war events that led to the signing of the Ta'if Agreement) as this context sheds light on the reasons *why* a consociational system (albeit improved) was put into place at Ta'if. Indeed, such a context explains why and under what conditions consociationalism is opted for, therefore suggesting that improved structures of consociational governance and elaborations of the consociational model have a better chance of making the model work as the theory suggests and increasing the utility of the theory. Hence, after outlining a number of observations regarding the current relative stability of the country, the chapter will address the above-mentioned issues before it moves to a detailed discussion of the Ta'if Agreement.

After more than a decade of implementing the new revised consociational structure of rule, the latter has not so far generated democratic stability for Lebanon's plural society, as consociational theory assumes. However, the country enjoys a certain degree of stability, and this has prevented the outbreak of communal conflict, despite a number of security and political incidents that have led to a questioning of the current stability of the country. Political assassinations, government crackdowns on peaceful protests and the closure of ideological establishments (such as the popular opposition station, MTV), amongst other incidents, have cast doubt on the internal stability and security of Lebanon, thereby questioning Lebanon's official attempt to strengthen the re-emerging international trust in the country. A number of political assassinations have taken place despite the serious efforts of Syria and the successive post-war governments and regimes to control the security of the country and portray the impression that Lebanon is a stable country. In the words of Krayem, 'such events give the impression that the security situation in Lebanon is still volatile, and that the country is still a potential forum that could host conflicts and assassination attempts' (DSO, 5 August 2003).

Indeed, the functioning of the current consociational system in Lebanon suggests that in practice, there is a societal context in which a tenuous understanding of accommodation exists among different groups of unequal size and power within a particular balance of power among these groups and with the permanent intervention and backing of a third party, Syria. This fragile environment is revealed through the extraordinary weaknesses¹ exhibited by successive post-war Lebanese governments, very possibly suggesting that the instability of the Lebanese state lies in the consociational political structure of the country, which institutionalises and fosters sectarianism and its divisive consequences. Yet, if one were to try to change the balance of forces that already exists (in order to annihilate the divisive effects incurred by consociationalism, prevent the politicisation and manipulation of communal identity and minimise the risks of conflict outbreak), this would only entrench the insecurity within society and increase the instability in the country.² This Lebanese dilemma illustrates the central question of this thesis (the allegedly causative relationship between consociationalism and democratic stability). In this light, the present chapter examines in detail the features and more importantly, the workings of the current post-war consociational model, and sheds light on the various factors that explain the relative stability of the country for more than a decade. This stability started institutionally speaking, in 1990, when the 1989 Ta'if Agreement, officially known as the Document of National Accord or National Reconciliation, was incorporated into the Lebanese Constitution and introduced major amendments to the latter.

From the outset, and quite apart from the fact that the new consociational formula was largely imposed from the outside, it should be pointed out that it was, in some respects, the only formula that effectively ended the Lebanese fifteen-year civil war, and sustained the relative stability of the system, thereby highlighting the need to re-evaluate the ability of the model to act as a conflict-regulation mechanism within plural societies. Indeed, as noted above, any change of the consociational political system seems prone to generate political instability, which would have a detrimental effect on societal stability. This in itself does not undermine the importance of the consociational theory. However, after more than a decade of implementing the new accord, there is little reason to believe that adjustments made in the consociational model in post-war Lebanon will be effective in preventing conflict.³ Indeed, the relative stability of the Lebanese political system

¹ Briefly, the Lebanese state is weak, in that the government has difficulty in arriving at domestic policies, has difficulty in organising itself to implement policies, and has difficulty in dealing effectively with international relations.

² When the opportunity for system change presented itself during peace-making efforts in the late 1980s, Syria was willing to postpone a fundamental change in the governance of Lebanon and went along with a modified consociational form that had broadly failed in the past. This was so in the light of the past experiences and history of Lebanon as well as Israel's failed attempt to establish a government of its own making in Beirut.

³ The fact that the Ta'if Accord has readjusted/recalibrated the power configuration among the various communal groups without altering the nature of the political system has led Sa'egh to question the relevance of referring to the 1989 constitutional amendments as the birth of the Second Lebanese Republic. For more on this issue, see Dawoud el Sa'egh, *Al Nizām al Loubnani fi thawābitihi wa tahawoulātihi*, Beirut: Dar An-Nahar lil Nachr, 2000, pp.42-46.

owes much to Syria's continuous twin-backing of the Ta'if Agreement (which is consociational in nature) and of its implementation.

However, Lebanon still faces major problems and challenges that will be dealt with in the present chapter. Writing in 1999, Norton observes that 'unfortunately, nearly ten years after the agreement to end the war was signed in Ta'if, Saudi Arabia, Lebanon is still wracked by problems' (Norton 1999, 41) that undermine the stability of the country. This suggests that democratic stability is unlikely to emerge internally and be maintained under the prevailing political, economic and social conditions. Indeed, were it not for continuous Syrian intervention, with some American acquiescence, the country may not be able to hold together. Hudson questions as follows: 'Is it any wonder then, that, while Syria's "hegemonic" role is widely resented in Lebanon, even some Lebanese who resent it wonder, whether Lebanon would retain its post-Ta'if stability without it?' (Hudson 1999b, 33). In other words, the new consociational system alone does not seem to have fulfilled its objective of creating political stability within democratic practices. Rather, the Syrian role seems crucial in assisting it. Hence, this re-activates the debate concerning the ability of the consociational model alone to generate democratic stability.

The chapter will begin by a concise historical chronology of the major events since 1990 until the present day. Then, it will situate the context of the 1989 Ta'if Agreement. The discussion will subsequently examine the impact of the favourable regional and local situations on the peacemaking efforts in 1989. Then, the chapter will describe the new provisions of the Ta'if Agreement which introduced amendments and changes to the Lebanese Constitution, and hence, to the workings of the Lebanese political system. Subsequently, the discussion will examine how the new revised political formula and the post-war Lebanese political system relate to the model of consociational democracy. Afterwards, the chapter will discuss the lingering problems in the post-Ta'if era. Finally, the discussion will recapitulate the main findings of the present chapter.

A. Historical chronology

After fifteen years of war, peace was imposed by Syria. Lebanon saw the creation of the Second Republic with the ratification of the Ta'if Agreement. In 1989, Parliament elected Mouawad as the President of the Republic. He was assassinated shortly after. President Hrawi was then elected for an initial six-year term that was later extended for two more years (through an amendment of the Constitution). Hence, President Hrawi's term lasted from 1989 until 1998. During Hrawi's presidency, intra-Christian fighting ended with the exile of General Aoun. In 1991, all militias, apart from Hizbollah, were disarmed and the task of rebuilding the shattered infrastructure (roads,

telephone lines and power supply) started. In 1992, Premier Karami was forced to resign after rampant inflation. Hariri, a billionaire, became the Prime Minister and started his over-ambitious reconstruction project, which created jobs. The 1992 parliamentary elections had the lowest turnover ever. Nabih Berri was elected as Parliament Speaker, mainly because of his pro-Syrian stance. In 1996, the parliamentary elections reflected a higher turnover, despite continuous Christian boycott. The first municipality (local) elections were held for the first time since the beginning of the 1975 war in 1998. Christian participation in the elections increased and the elections reflected a positive mood in the country, as they represented a move towards decentralisation (one of Ta'if's provisions). Before his term in office expired, President Hrawi attempted to introduce an optional civil marriage law. However, he was faced by mounting opposition from religious clerics from all confessions, traditional politicians (who did not want to lose their clienteles or upset religious clerics) and surprisingly, Lebanese youth (hence reflecting heightened religious and sectarian hostility).

In 1998, Lahoud, the previous army commander, was elected President of the Republic and Salim al-Hoss became prime minister. Hoss founded a government of austerity composed mainly of technocrats. The economic situation worsened from 1998 until 2000, partly as a result of a number of Israeli strikes. However, Israel withdrew from South Lebanon in 2000, apart from its continuous occupation of the disputed Sheb'aa farms. As a result of this, Hizbollah's popularity increased and the party won majority Shi'i seats in the parliamentary elections of the summer of 2000. The electoral law was designed to promote the election of pro-Syrian candidates and the stifling of the opposition. Also, as a result of the deteriorating economic situation, Hariri and his cross-confessional allies, won all the seats in Beirut's constituency, ousting traditional notables such as Salam and Hoss from Parliament. In other words, votes were bought. Post-war Lebanon witnessed the emergence of a consociational system of rule, exemplified by the troika, i.e., the Maronite President, the Sunni Prime Minister and the Shi'i Parliament Speaker, who, together, represent the three largest communities in Lebanon. As such, the regime of the Second Republic remains, just like the pre-war one, actor-centered rather than institution-centered, despite some efforts of Premier Hoss to rebuild state institutions. However, while the coming to power of Lahoud saw some steps towards the effective control of internal peace and security, and an attempt to build a stronger state and insulate it from the control of the traditional political and economic elites, Hariri's continuous attempts to avoid reforming the state resulted in serious personality as well as ideological clashes between the president and the prime minister. As a result, Syria continues to control the security situation in Lebanon and to ensure that consociational constitutional structures of rule are applied, in cases of clashes among the troika and the top office holders (i.e., the various poles of power, which include Druze leader Walid Junblat).

B. Situating the context of the 1989 Ta'if Agreement

During the war years, numerous negotiation efforts were undertaken. Indeed, 'there were many attempts to settle the conflict (conferences at the local and regional levels, mediation efforts by foreign powers)' which 'ranged in form and substance from unilateral to multilateral, formal to informal, short to long-lived and piecemeal to comprehensive' (Faris 1994, 21). The Ta'if Agreement succeeded in providing a formula capable of ending the fifteen-year Lebanese civil war because it was the product of two simultaneously converging efforts, one carried out at the local level and another at the regional level. The 1989 efforts were successful only because the regional and internal situations were favourable to peacemaking. That is, they somehow imposed effective peacemaking. Here, Krayem points out that 'internal changes coincided with developments on the regional and international levels that also favored a political settlement in Lebanon' (Krayem 1997, 419).

1. Mediation efforts 1975-1989

From 1975 to 1985, there were some unsuccessful attempts to resolve the civil war in which the main militia leaders were involved. Although none of the militia forces were happy with the situation as it stood, they could find no way out, so the war continued. Syria initially sent a force into Lebanon to support the Christian forces against Muslim attack. This was at the request of President Franjiyeh in 1976. Later, the Arab League legitimised Syria's presence in Lebanon as part of an Arab peace keeping force. Between 1982 and 1984, there was a multinational force (U.S., France, Britain and Italy). There were sporadic attempts at mediation. However, these attempts would get the leaders of the three main militias to try to find a way out of the situation. As a result of the limited scope of representation as well as the illegitimate character of these attempts at mediation (i.e., the main or "significant" militia leaders who do not constitute the legitimate representatives of Lebanon), none of the latter succeeded.

The failure of mediation efforts to bring about peace can be traced back to two main reasons. First, at a local level, and at the beginning of the war, there was no serious commitment on the side of any of the warring factions to end the conflict. This is because they refused to compromise on difficult and sensitive issues. The Christian bloc mainly rejected Muslim demands for a more equitable distribution in political representation, as based on the existing demographic map. Meanwhile, the Muslims insisted on these demands as a condition for ending the conflict. Thus, fighting coupled with the prospect of victory took precedence over peacemaking. It was only later on that traditional leaders realised that no one side could win the war. By that stage, efforts at ending the war lacked

effective implementation mechanisms. At other times, these efforts were met by internal violence and regional turbulence, thereby preventing successful peacemaking and in some cases, preventing the possibility of meeting amidst violence.

The second reason behind the failure of such efforts was Lebanon's fragile social and political makeup, its size and geographical location. These factors make it very difficult for the country to remain immune from outside influence and intervention. Turbulent regional and international developments have repercussions locally on the Lebanese domestic political scene. For instance, Krayem writes that 'the Lebanese conflict had always been linked in significant ways to the Arab-Israeli conflict' (Krayem 1997, 419). Thus, Lebanon's peace was linked to a stable regional situation and the consent of the world's leading powers. Here, Khalaf argues that the popular 'no-winner, no-loser' Lebanese formula resulted in Lebanon never being able to 'freely will its entry in or exit from war' (Khalaf 1994, 274-5). This formula suggests that the inability of any group to dominate over others, and by the same token, its inability to reach consensus with others, requires and invites outside mediation, often conducted along the lines of the interests of the outside mediator.

In contrast, successful peacemaking became possible in 1989 because the regional situation was more favourable to peace, as events within this context were less turbulent, thereby permitting Arab diplomatic efforts. At the same time however, Israel's dominant military position in the region provided a fundamental impetus for Syria to end the Lebanese war. In this sense, the Ta'if agreement, which should not be mistaken for the manifestation of a Lebanese overarching loyalty, came about as a result of a compromise mainly imposed by Syria in the light of conditions of crisis. At a local level, the warring factions inside Lebanon had become more committed to peacemaking, and convinced of the need to make compromises in order to stop the fighting. Also, Arab insistence on the need to reach consensus, coupled with the legitimate and at the same time broad scope of representation of the Ta'if negotiations contributed significantly towards reaching an agreement acceptable to the parties involved in the conflict.

Referring to the efforts of the National Dialogue Committee (25 September- 24 November 1975), Faris writes that 'a close reading of the committee minutes indicates that neither side had the intent of breaking the deadlock: each was convinced that it would prevail on the battleground' (Faris 1994, 22). It is important to note that during the early war years, each party involved in the conflict believed in the idea that the war would lead to victory over the other parties. Thus, at that stage, the efforts of the National Dialogue Committee failed to bring about an arrangement acceptable to all the parties involved in the conflict. Faris also cites another effort at peacemaking, the Constitutional

document (14 February 1976): 'Although never enshrined in law, the constitutional document established the direction and parameters for a future agreement' (Faris 1994, 23). However, the author points to the facts that the document had no 'credible mechanism for enforcing its provisions' and that it was rejected by some parties to the conflict (Faris 1994, 23). More specifically, the document could not end the war, mainly because not all parties to the conflict accepted it.

Concerning the Riyadh-Cairo Arab summit conferences (October 1976), Faris writes that 'although the summits called on the Lebanese to reconcile their differences, they did not offer any substantive recommendations' (Faris 1994, 24). In particular, the author recalls that the events that followed ended all hope of implementing the summit. He argues that from 1976 to 1982, internal and regional events and conflicts made consensus difficult. At this time, the Lebanese war was raging in a turbulent regional context. According to Faris, the Geneva meeting (31 October- 4 November 1983) 'was stalemated. The meeting's only accomplishment was the definition by consensus of Lebanon's identity as an independent and sovereign Arab state' (Faris 1994, 25). While the meeting did not provide a formula capable of ending the war, it was nonetheless important in that it clarified the controversial, elusive identity of Lebanon provided by the 1943 National Pact, which stated that Lebanon was a country with 'an Arab character', rather than an Arab country. Thus, the meeting is seen as an initial, although insufficient, step towards agreement on a widely contested and controversial issue, namely the spirit and identity of Lebanon. The Ta'if Agreement later specified that Lebanon is of Arabic affiliation and identity. In the Lausanne Conference (12-20 March 1984), Faris remarks that although the leading political figures were present in person, and were close to an agreement, they 'failed to reach a consensus and divided along religious lines when it came to the necessary reforms'. In other words, at the local level, the Lebanese leaders refused to 'accept' and admit the necessity of compromise over sensitive issues.

The Damascus Tripartite Agreement (28 December 1985) differed from previous peacemaking efforts. Indeed, 'its main features were the transitional abolition of sectarianism in the three highest offices, the legislative, executive and judiciary branches of government and the distinctive relations with Syria' (Faris 1994, 26). Furthermore, Faris points out that this meeting was important in the sense that 'the plan's two new elements (phased abolition of sectarianism and special relations with Syria) became key issues that any future settlement would have to address' (Faris 1994, 26). Although compromise was hard to reach among the parties to the conflict, however, it would be safe to say that despite the failure of the agreement to provide an effective peacemaking formula, it was a prelude, or antechamber, to successful peacemaking that would follow four years later, in 1989. That is, it was a clear indication that the sort of pact that would result in the end would reflect

the dominant position of the forces and actors/players on the Lebanese and regional scenes, and hence, would lay out the structures of governance that reflected such domination.

2. The regional context

As has been mentioned above, Lebanon's peace is directly linked to the stability of the region. Here, Krayem's comment that 'the cause of the Lebanese civil war was neither exclusively internal nor exclusively external nor was its settlement' (Krayem 1997, 412) takes on an unprecedented significance for the present discussion. Krayem elaborates on this by observing that 'the civil war came to an end at a specific historical juncture when movement toward internal reconciliation coincided with favorable regional and international developments' (Krayem 1997, 412). By 1989, regional and international developments were more favourable to peace, and this permitted Arab diplomatic efforts towards solving the conflict with the consent and blessing of the world's leading powers. As Krayem points out, 'the U.S. was interested in curtailing the crisis in Lebanon so as not to derail the Arab-Israeli peace process...The U.S. supported the Ta'if negotiations and lent its support both in Arab circles and vis-à-vis Syria toward the successful completion of those talks' (Krayem 1997, 420). A further example relating to this discussion, and one that best illustrates the link between Lebanon and the region, is the 1991 Gulf war. It is believed that Syria's President Assad was given a free hand to bring about order and stability to war-torn Lebanon in return for joining the war in Kuwait. In effect, the Syrian Arab Republic sent a full-armoured division to the Saudi border, without however participating in the hostilities. Thus, it is said that the Bush administration gave Assad a tacit green light, or at the very least, turned a blind eye, to Syria's being a major player on the Lebanese domestic scene. In the end, the regional effort manifested itself in many respects, first in bringing the legitimate parties to the negotiation table, second in an insistence on the need to reach an agreement, and third in providing a mechanism for implementing the Accord, and later on, in Syrian military and political participation towards implementing it.

First, Arab efforts to put an end to the war were conducted through many channels in order to bring together to the negotiating table all the concerned parties. Here, Kassir observes that the end of the civil war was not the result of a pure Lebanese decision, by pointing out that the Ta'if Agreement does not emanate from the Lebanese alone. It was launched on an Arab initiative, mandated by the Arab League, taken up by the special envoy, Lakhdar Brahimi and given birth to by Saudi Arabia's diplomacy, mainly through Rafic Hariri (Kassir 2000, 7).⁴ Thus, synchronised efforts of many Arab channels were successful in bringing the parties to the negotiating table. These efforts were the fruit

⁴ Translated from French.

of previous attempts beginning on the 23rd May 1989 with an emergency summit meeting of Arab leaders in Casablanca, Morocco. This led to the formation of a Tripartite Arab Committee, comprising King Hassan of Morocco, King Fahd of Saudi Arabia and President Chathli of Algeria.

Second, Arab, and mainly Saudi Arabia's categorical uncompromising insistence on the need to reach an agreement on highly controversial matters is especially conspicuous. This is mainly because the controversial matters at play were crucial issues for the traditional political leaders. One observation that illustrates that the Ta'if Agreement was imposed by conditions of crisis is Norton's comment that 'it is striking that foreign diplomats exude more enthusiasm for the Ta'if process than the Lebanese themselves. They remain sceptical, if hopeful' (Norton 1991, 473). The comments by former Prime Minister Hoss may best illustrate the overall picture and Norton's observation cited above. Hoss points out that 'the most important thing about the agreement of Ta'if is that it is an agreement' (Reinkowski 1997, 507). Thus, the need to reach an agreement took precedence over the nature and details of such an agreement, since this need was imposed through conditions of crisis.

One such controversial issue addressed at Ta'if was the issue of Lebanese-Syrian relations. Ta'if's clauses relating to this issue illustrate the fact that Ta'if was imposed by conditions of crisis and therefore, reflected the dominant position of Syria in relation to Lebanon. This was particularly the case on account of the fragility of the regional situation and the repercussions it would have on Lebanese stability, as well as the fragility of Lebanon's socio-economic and political makeup and its likely local and regional repercussions. Maila points out that the Ta'if clauses related to Syro-Lebanese relations were all pre-written and only minor wording differences were permitted. The author argues that the Lebanese Deputies had little maneuver and margin of freedom, and could not venture far from the original text (Maila 1994, 38). Indeed, Mansour, who is one of the architects of the Ta'if Accord and who participated in its "making", reveals in his 1993 book, *The coup against Ta'if*, that the outstanding majority of the deputies who came to Ta'if were not aware of the original version of the text and of the amendments that were made to it prior to their coming. Mansour furthermore writes that it is crucial to point to the limited freedom that was given to the deputies in terms of their ability to discuss and amend the text, since it was made clear to them that discussing and amending the text should not translate into refusal, failure and hence the continuation of the war and the threat of a possible inexistence of Lebanon as a country (Mansour 1993, 39).⁵ Similarly, Khalaf reveals that 'it was clear that some of the conferees were acting under duress. Although they were freely elected participants, the charged atmosphere imposed constraints on how far they could have ranged beyond some of the pre-prepared texts and agendas. They were left with a limited

⁵ Translated from Arabic.

margin to maneuver or to work out alternative schemes and proposals' (Khalaf 2002, 299). For example, concerning the provision that 'Lebanon was prohibited from becoming a source of threat to Syria's security and a passageway or *place d'armes* for any force, state, or organization that might endanger it', Barak notes that 'it is noteworthy that this concluding section was the result of prior agreement between the Tripartite Arab High Commission and Syria, and the Lebanese Deputies were unable to alter it' (Barak 2000, 35-6). Similarly, Krayem, in referring to the Ta'if Agreement, mentions 'a document that had already largely been prepared by the Arab Tripartite Committee after much consultation with Syria, the United States and various Lebanese leaders' (Krayem 1997, 421).

Later, comparable accounts confirmed such practices as some delegates to Ta'if or close family members of major delegates to Ta'if publicly revealed the extent of external involvement, giving examples of such involvement in the "making" and wordings (such as word replacements) of the Ta'if Accord. Such comments and practices stress those arguments in this thesis, namely that consociationalism tends to prevent the political system from reaching political maturity, i.e., it does not readily allow the elites the ability to be aware of what constitutes national interest and be capable of creating and maintaining stability along the lines of national interest. Thus, consociationalism tends to involve a heavy dose of external arbitration as a remedy for this internally conflictual situation. Additionally, these practices at Ta'if seem to indicate that consociationalism, as a system of rule, is often chosen as a last resort. This indicates the many shortcomings it may generate as well as a tendency for it to be imposed, rather than freely chosen.

Third, the Accord, through Arab efforts, provides an Arab mechanism to 'help Lebanon in its transition to peace' through 'an Arab commission that will serve as an intermediary during Lebanese-Syrian negotiations over the duration and size of the Syrian troop presence in Lebanon'. Maila argues that this Arab guarantee reassures parties hostile to Syria (Maila 1994, 37). However, his observation that the Accord highlights the conflict's 'very strong regional dimension' (Maila 1994, 37) is equally insightful. More importantly, it may be said that the Accord highlights the *very strong regional dimension of the solution to the conflict*, and not only of the conflict itself. Thus, Ta'if reflects the dominant, broker role Syria plays to ensure a proper running of consociational mechanisms and a stable (although far from smooth) operability of consociational principles and consociational politics.

In terms of implementing the Ta'if Agreement effectively, it is safe to say that the Accord alone was not sufficient to end the war. Kassir writes that it is the expulsion of General Aoun from the presidential palace that ended the war and points out that this step also was not purely and solely

Lebanese (Kassir 2000, 8).⁶ In actual fact, Syrian air and ground troop operations around the presidential palace and in the area controlled by General Aoun forced the latter's expulsion. This was one of numerous steps that Syria took to restore consociationalism. Thus, Syria appears to be the major institutional structure in ensuring that consociational mechanisms are adhered to.

3. The local context

Although peacemaking efforts at the local level started months after the beginning of the Lebanese civil war, they however lacked an essential criterion for success, namely a serious commitment among the warring factions on the ground to compromise in order to put an end to the conflict. This commitment meant an agreement on the need to introduce political reforms and naturally, an agreement on the nature and content of political reforms. Some observers of Lebanese politics argue that the Lebanese civil war was a continuation of consociational politics by other means. For instance, Messarra writes that during the war, the consociational law regulated violence and fighting. According to Messarra, the aim was to achieve 'strategic and mutual parity in killing', which could be taken to mean what Messarra refers to as consociational law. Still according to Messarra, the aim was not to achieve any military target but only to demoralise the opponent, even though all parties concerned knew that this opponent was impossible to eliminate or conquer (Messarra 1986, 107). It is crucial to point out here that Messarra's argument seems problematic, as the civil war involved more than an attempt to demoralise opponents. Rather, it was a bloody and violent inter- as well as intra-sectarian affair, which resulted in the mutual decimation of a significant number of families belonging to the same sect. It also involved a loss of awareness among the warring factions as well as a socio-economic conflict fuelled by class inequalities. Hence, Messarra's argument that the war was a continuation of consociational politics by other violent means seems problematic. Although Lebanese consociational politics tended to involve a certain dose of elite competition and adversarial behaviour that sometimes led to conflicts involving violence, these were manifestations of the consociational model in action that point to the internal flaws of the theory. However, the elites were aware of how much the stability of the system could afford such adversarial behaviour. In the case of the civil war however, elite awareness was shattered and consensus broke down. By the same token, the collapse of the system revealed the structural problem in the organisation of pre-war Lebanese political rule. If the historical, bloody war events are anything to go by, the degree and nature of violence seem to suggest that no consideration was given to the consociational rules of the game, as Messarra holds.

⁶ Translated from French.

It is useful to discuss Kabbara's critiques of the arguments advanced by Messarra. The first is Messarra's insistence on consociationalism as the best option for the Lebanese political system and the second one being 'his continual attempt to fix the confessional identity as the main, if not the only reality of the social fabric of the country' (Kabbara 1991, 346). Furthermore, Kabbara writes that: 'in one argument, Messarra sees consociational democracy as the product of the balance of force among the two communities and the incapacity of any of them to annihilate the other. And in another theoretical turn, a new argument was presented in which consociational democracy became the outcome of common values and perceptions shared by the Lebanese people' (Kabbara 1991, 350). Kabbara's observation is particularly relevant. This is because it is inadequate to view consociational democracy as 'the outcome of common values and perceptions shared by the Lebanese' as Messarra writes. Messarra portrays consociational democracy as an end in itself that the Lebanese aim for. Rather, it would be more appropriate to say that this model represents, for the Lebanese elites, the most feasible means for them to preserve their dominant position within the system through the manipulation of communal consciousness and the patron-client system to avoid dealing with class inequalities and block the emergence of a class-based consciousness that cuts across communal groups. Additionally, and quite apart from the regional dimension discussed above, resorting to the consociational model illustrates elites' common rejection of partition schemes, which are economically unviable. In other words, the consociational model can be considered more of a way of preserving the status quo that Lebanese elites benefit from, rather than an end in itself based on a tradition of elite accommodation, as Messarra maintains.

During the early years of the war, each side was convinced it was going to prevail on the battleground. It is only much later that the warring factions realised no side could win the war. Otherwise, had there been an early awareness by the warring factions of the futility of the conflict, as Messarra argues, successful peacemaking would have been achieved earlier. It would certainly not have taken fifteen years to achieve this. Rather, for many Lebanese parties involved in the conflict, the war was a self-defence mechanism, as they perceived some of their Lebanese rivals as a direct threat to their existence and position within society, coupled with an acute sense of communal and class consciousness. Thus, violent inter and intra sectarian fighting among the Lebanese militias (notably intra-Maronite and intra-Shi'ite family/clan fighting and killing) took precedence over peacemaking.

Later on into the war years, 'there was general acceptance that none of the warring factions could decisively win the war, and that there was no alternative to a new compromise ensuring the continuity of Lebanon as an entity having a united central political system' (Krayem 1997, 418). Thus, this can be considered a turning point of the civil war in the sense that it gave way to two

important developments. First, it led to an enhanced awareness of the real nature of Lebanese society and politics and thus, to a more serious commitment towards putting an end to the conflict. Second, it narrowed down the choices available to Lebanese leaders in order to end conflict, precisely because the enhanced awareness of the nature of the conflict led to a more adequate understanding of the possible solutions. Just like the 1958 civil war 'showed that whatever the shortcomings of the existing system, the alternatives were still less attractive' (Rabinovich 1985, 29), the on-going 1975 civil war showed that a return to a consociational structure was the most feasible and realistic option. Rabinovich adds that 'whatever the system's obvious deficiencies, it did not seem that any other could preserve the Lebanese state as a pluralistic polity' (Rabinovich 1985, 26).

For instance, unrealistic scenarios such as partition, assimilation and federalism, which did not attract much enthusiasm in the first place, whether at the elite or mass levels, were ruled out: 'Indeed, during the years of civil war there had been many indications that the majority of ordinary citizens and many social, cultural, and popular organizations were against the separation of citizens, regions and cities. They expressed their desire for unity many times, confronting the militias...' (Krayem 1997, 418). Equally, 'public intolerance for the continuation of the civil war and support for a quick settlement grew rapidly' (Krayem 1997, 418). As to the impracticality of partition, this procedure was not refused because of the often-held argument of Lijphart and Messarra, which attribute such refusal to a Lebanese tradition of political accommodation and compromise (which is actually based on economic and clientelistic motivations that result in a temporary political consensus). Rather, partition was refused precisely for economic reasons, as it is economically less viable. Indeed, while partition was considered as a peacemaking attempt, it was ultimately rejected. Moreover, with regard to the Shi'is, their geographical location in the South (on the Israeli border on the one hand and engulfed in a predominantly Sunni regional map on the other) makes it difficult for them to accept partition. Another reason is as one economist puts it:

Lebanon is a small nation, with no suitable economic space or natural resources needed to develop the production forces and the accumulation of capital. Reducing Lebanon to cantons within the framework of a decentralized political system would undermine the basis for healthy economic development and the possibility of integrating Lebanon into the international market... Such an alternative would also eliminate the bourgeoisie's sources of revenue, not to mention the income and revenue of the working class (Hamdan 1991, 95).⁷

⁷ For a historical account of the reasons why the Pope has tended to refuse Maronite scenarios of 'partition or other schemes such as federation, cantonization', see DSO, 22 April 2003. For Arab, Syrian and international rejection of such conflict-regulation schemes, see Oren Barak, The hardships of consociation, the perils of partition: Lebanon, 1943-1990 [Davis Occasional Papers, N. 86, November 2000]. Israel: The Hebrew University of Jerusalem [The Leonard Davis Institute for International Relations], 2000, pp.29-30

Thus, as the civil war events unfolded and dragged on, elite awareness of the nature of the conflict, and hence its solution, have somehow been enhanced. Despite the subsequent adoption of a revised consociational formula, this is not to say that this thesis considers, as Lijphart, Messarra and Dekmejian do, the consociational model as the best form of rule for Lebanon. Indeed, the above-mentioned authors have tended to argue that Lebanon's inflexible institutionalisation of consociational principles resulted in the outbreak of the war and have suggested that the solution to Lebanon's problem lies in the introduction and adoption of principles that conform precisely to consociational theory. Rather, this thesis considers the failure of consociational democracy in pre-war Lebanon as a natural, in-built flaw of consociational theory.

Arguing during the war years against the appropriateness of the consociational model in the Lebanese context, Hudson writes that 'the consociational prescription actually exacerbated instability and fostered the eventual breakdown... I am not convinced that consociational democracy in the sense of prescriptive constitutional engineering will do much for Lebanon or for other divided societies' (Hudson 1988, 230-33). Importantly, these dilemmas were instigated by two contradicting factors, the breakdown of the pre-war Lebanese political system on the one hand and the unfeasibility of other forms of government (for many reasons) on the other. This explains why the Ta'if Accord had a consociational character and 'contained no surprises [as] it was based on the established consociative principle of the need to share power in order to regulate the conflict of interest between the various sects' (Rigby 2000, 176). As Maila puts it, 'Ta'if's lack of surprises is certainly understandable given that, like all intercommunal agreements, it was the product of a compromise, and that the number of possible compromise solutions is limited' (Maila 1994, 38).

In sum, the Arab League decided to convene a congress in the province of Ta'if, Saudi Arabia, from the 30th of September until the 22nd of October 1989, where what was left of the Lebanese Parliament discussed a possible solution to the war. Unlike the previous attempts at mediation, which involved militia forces (who were at each other's throat during the Ta'if negotiations), an attempt was now made to bring the legitimate political elements of the society to consider the matter. Effectively, 'sixty-two Lebanese Deputies (those still alive of the ninety-nine originally elected in 1972)' (Krayem 1997, 421) worked out, under Arab and mainly Syrian guidance, the 1989 Ta'if Agreement, which is the major amendment to the Lebanese Constitution. The negotiations involved twenty-two days of intense discussions. The aim of the Ta'if Agreement was to bring out a revised political formula for war-torn Lebanon, one that would be acceptable to all parties involved. This agreement built up yet another form of consociational agreement to put the country back together. Indeed, it re-affirmed, institutionalised and strengthened the consociational aspect of the country. Despite all the Accord's deficiencies, the Ta'if Agreement has Lebanese

legitimacy, although not all of the Deputies from the 1972 Chamber were alive when it was signed (Kassir 2000, 7).⁸ Indeed, the Deputies that signed the 1989 Ta'if Agreement and who form around two thirds of the Chamber, were elected to the Chamber seventeen years earlier, without this however questioning the Chamber's legitimacy. In the end, the Document of National Reconciliation was signed on 24 October 1989 (Hudson 1995, 734) by fifty-eight of the sixty-two Deputies attending the session. This suggested that there was significant support for the accord. Subsequently, the accord was 'approved by the Lebanese Parliament on August 21, 1990, and signed into law by [the first acting post-war President of what is referred to as the Second Republic] President Elias Hraoui on September 21, 1990' (The Beirut Review 1991a, 121). This broad scope of representation at Ta'if and the legitimate support given to the accord deserve attention, and will be discussed in the following section.

C. The 1989 Ta'if Agreement

The Lebanese civil war involved a number of forces, engaged in a conflict where no one was able to predominate and no one saw any future in the continuation of the conflict. In the civil war, Syria has acted at times in a seemingly arbitrary manner. Thus, the war could only end when a third party would end it and would ensure that the peace that is made will prevail. Indeed, if the history of civil wars is anything to go by, third parties in pursuit of their own interests become involved and establish order in the warring country. In Lebanon's case, it was basically Syria and it may be said that regional powers, such as Syria, have conducted their foreign policies for their own interests and smaller nations only benefit when such interests happen to coincide with theirs. With Syria's role in Lebanon being fundamentally important and hence intended to create stability in both countries, Syria's efforts to restore Lebanon's stability are noteworthy. For instance, Barak writes that 'Syria's effort to restore order in Lebanon while preserving its unity, received regional and international support and were accorded legitimacy' (Barak 2000, 37).⁹ Hence, the Lebanese experiment with consociationalism has shown the need for external arbitration, coupled with military presence if need be, so as to ensure the effective (though not smooth) operation of consociational mechanisms of rule. Since the Lebanese consociational political institutions of rule are the elites, such a system of governance frequently prevents the country from reaching political maturity, in that it is difficult for elites to be aware, and to be able to perceive what constitutes national interest, and more importantly to act on it. With Syria being the major player in Lebanon, stability comes mainly from Syria. Indeed, in line with the definition of stability as used in the present research when it comes to

⁸ Translated from French.

the Lebanese case, the system may be said to be stable where local elites alone are able to maintain political, social and economic stability within the divided society, without recourse to external arbitration.

1. The scope of the Ta'if Agreement

First, it is useful to consider the scope of representation of the Ta'if Agreement, specifically its capacity as a conflict-regulating peacemaking pact, drawing on the discussions of pacts undertaken in Chapter 3 and 4. From the outset, the broad scope of representation at Ta'if, namely the legislative branch (i.e., the Chamber that has popular legitimacy as it is elected) should not be taken to mean that the Ta'if Accord enjoys popular support among the Lebanese. Rather, the present discussion argues that the 1943 National Pact, devised by the Lebanese grand coalition, i.e., the executive branch (Khoury and Solh), laid out the real and effective structures of rule of Lebanon. Then, the Ta'if Accord strengthened such consociational structures, without really changing the character of the political system, which remained consociational.¹⁰ In other words, the Ta'if Accord only readjusted the National Pact to suit the changing political, economic, social, demographic and regional realities. However, the fact that the legislative branch, accountable as it is to the public, institutionalised and approved a structure of rule laid out by the pre-war executive branch, (i.e., the ruling elitist grand coalition), seems to indicate Syria's willingness to block an effective striving for political change in Lebanon. For instance, Syria's rejection of any real change when the opportunity manifested itself, coupled with the fact that the accord does not establish a time frame for the abolition of confessionalism,¹¹ indicate Syria's willingness to permanently institutionalise confessionalism in the Lebanese political system. This permits it to permanently stabilise the Lebanese front, and to give the new pact a legal, binding and more broadly-based character. It would be safe to say that Syria has shown unequalled resistance to other forms of government in Lebanon, for reasons that promote the stability of both countries in the light of regional turbulence.

⁹ For similar comments, see Eric V. Thompson, 'Will Syria have to withdraw from Lebanon?'. Middle East journal (Winter) Vol.56, No.1, pp.72-93, 2002, p.86 and Roger Owen, State, power and politics in the making of the modern Middle East, 2nd Edition. London: Routledge, 2000, p.247

¹⁰ For similar comments, i.e., the revised formula that remained consociational, like the pact, see Ussama Makdisi, 'Reconstructing the nation-state: the modernity of sectarianism in Lebanon'. Middle East Report (July-September), No. 200, pp. 23-6, 1996, p.26; Maurus Reinkowski, 'National identity in Lebanon since 1990'. Orient Vol.38, No.3, (September), pp.493-515, 1997, p.500 and p.507; Augustus Richard Norton, 'Lebanon after Ta'if: Is the civil war over?'. Middle East Journal (Summer), Vol.45, No.3, pp.457-73, 1991, p.461; Michael Hudson, 'Trying again: power-sharing in post-civil war Lebanon'. International Negotiation Vol.2, No.1, pp.103-22, 1997, p.113; Michael C. Hudson, 'Lebanon after Ta'if: another reform opportunity lost?'. Arab Studies Quarterly (Winter), Vol.21, No.1, pp.27-40, 1999b, p.27 and Joseph Maila, 'The Ta'if Accord: an evaluation'. In Deirdre Collings, eds. Peace for Lebanon? From war to reconstruction, pp.31-44. London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1994, p.31.

¹¹ In this respect, it is important to point out that the 1943 National Pact was also thought of as a provisional agreement. Quoting Henry Pharaon, one of the principle Lebanese negotiators then, Hanf writes that 'the confessional distribution of offices of state, let alone of civil service posts, was not intended to last forever. It was thought of as provisional' (Hanf 1993, 73), hence suggesting that it may not be readily possible to presently do away with the confessional system.

The Chamber's endorsement of an elitist grand coalition pact (despite refining it) indicates that this was one way Syria could deal effectively with the Lebanese problem once and for all, by getting the legitimate representatives of Lebanese society to legitimise a revised pact that was previously concluded by two leaders (Khoury and Solh) who can not be said to be the legitimate representatives of Lebanese society. Thus, what is often referred to as the Document of National Accord being endorsed by the Chamber (that has legitimacy) does not mean that the Ta'if Accord enjoys popular support. Indeed, the 1943 National Pact did not gather the necessary popular support at that time. Hence, there is little reason to believe that an amended pact that fails to alter the nature of the political system would enjoy popular support. Additionally, the fact that the Ta'if Agreement was conducted among all the legitimate representatives of Lebanese society (as opposed to pacts concluded by few elites) should not be taken to mean that the Ta'if Accord enjoys popular support. Indeed, this broad scope of representation should not obscure the fact that popular support depends on the scope of representation as much as on the nature of the decisions taken. Hence, the Ta'if Accord being an imposed and revised National Pact, elitist in nature and rejected by the masses, it is safe to assume that this does not translate into popular support. In sum, it is sufficient to say that there was serious pressure on the Lebanese Deputies to accept the provisions of the Ta'if Accord. Here, Maila's observations that the Ta'if Accord does not 'represent real constitutional and political progress' and that Lebanon's political system is not based on a constitution but on temporary accords that fail (Collings 1994, 7) are noteworthy, and illustrate the fact that constitutional provisions do not always translate into literal application.

In the end, a revised consociational solution was suggested and somehow imposed from the outside to deal with a domestically unstable situation that had regional repercussions. Israel provided a fundamental impetus for Syria to end the Lebanese war, i.e., a condition of crisis. As a result, the consociational Ta'if Agreement should not be mistaken for the manifestation of a Lebanese overarching loyalty. Against this background, Syria seems to provide the background factor for re-establishing consociationalism within Lebanon. Drawing on the Lebanese case, it may be said that the proper functioning of the consociational model (as an effective conflict-regulation mechanism as assumed by consociational theory) requires the assistance of additional conflict-regulating practices from the conflict-regulation literature, namely arbitration. McGarry's comments below (that the discussion will return to later) illustrate Syria's role in post-war Lebanon:

From a normative perspective, arbitration is less attractive than accommodation worked out by the protagonists themselves, such as consociationalism or agreed integration or assimilation. Certain forms of external arbitration can be paternalistic, colonial and undemocratic in nature. However, arbitration is very much preferable to the one-sided methods of conflict regulation on offer, such as genocide, coercive assimilation, forced population transfers and hegemonic control; and if developed constructively, it can be the prelude to an agreed system of conflict regulation (McGarry 1994).

At this stage, it is useful to closely examine the Ta'if reforms. The Ta'if provisions relate to political and other reforms (administrative and court reforms, electoral law, education...) as well as the sovereignty of the Lebanese state over the entire Lebanese land and the liberation of Lebanon from Israeli occupation and Lebanese-Syrian relations. This next section examines to what extent the revised formula of the Ta'if Agreement relates to the consociational model of democracy, by presenting the 1990 Constitutional Amendments that relate to the four consociational principles.

2. Grand coalition

The 1990 Constitutional Amendments touch upon the consociational principle of grand coalition in three main respects. First, the powers of the Presidency, i.e., the Maronite President of the Republic, were reduced. Second, the powers of the Council of Ministers and the Sunni Prime Minister were increased. Third, the powers of the Shi'i Speaker of Parliament and of Parliament itself were also increased. These three amendments were aimed at readjusting the balance of power between the major Lebanese communal groups, and tend to reflect the actual position and power of each of the communal groups on the ground.

In the light of the pre-war politically dominant position of the Maronites, the previous consociational model brought with it a fragile accommodation structure skewed in favour of the Maronites. In other words, Chapter 4 argued that the procedural aspects of consociational theory in action did not result in a consociational model of rule (as the theory assumes will happen), but rather, a presidential one. Ta'if thus touches directly on, and alters, the principle of the grand coalition. To be more specific, the original article of the 1926 Lebanese Constitution, Article 17 (as modified by the constitutional law of 17 October 1927, Article 2) stated that 'executive power shall be entrusted to the President of the Republic who shall exercise it assisted by the Ministers in accordance with conditions laid down in this constitution' (Krayem 1997, 424). In practice, this meant a 'usually pliant Council of Ministers' (The Beirut Review 1991a, 120). In the Ta'if Agreement, Article 17 'which had become the emblematic basis of the Maronite predominance, was amended so that the executive branch of government was devoted to the Council of Ministers as a whole' (Salamé 1989, 104). According to Article 17 of the amended constitution, 'executive authority was removed from the President and vested in the Council of Ministers' (Salem 1998, 15): indeed, 'executive power shall be entrusted to the Council of Ministers, and the Council shall exercise it in accordance with conditions laid down in this Constitution' (Krayem 1997, 424). Specifically, Krayem points out that 'the new confessional formula was based on reducing the prerogatives of the President of the Republic and transferring the executive authority to the Council of Ministers as a collegial body' (Krayem 1997, 424). While this should mean that the new

executive grand coalition of post-war Lebanon should be the collegial body, i.e., the Council of Ministers, procedural manifestations of post-war consociational politics do not reflect such changes, as will be shown in the next section. Hence, the executive grand coalition of Lebanon reflected the “less dominant” position of the Maronites in the post-war power configuration of Lebanon, as a result of Maronite cooperation with Israel and the Maronites losing out in the war with Israeli withdrawal. Theoretically, the amendment of Article 17 can be said to have corrected the previous procedural deviation of the pre-war system from a presidential one towards a consociational one. As Davis puts it, ‘the 1990 Constitutional Amendments reflect a significant departure from the National Covenant of 1943 in that executive powers are now vested with the Cabinet (instead of the President in consultation with his Ministers)’ (Davis 1997, 139). However, while this correction was theoretical, the procedural aspects of post-war consociational politics suggest that the Presidency, (in effect the President of the Republic) still enjoys power and exercises it more than the Ta’if Accord allocates to the Presidency.

Second, as Krayem narrates the second alteration of the pre-war grand coalition by Ta’if:

The position of the Prime Minister, a traditionally Sunni post, as the President of the Council of Ministers, was strengthened; similarly, the power of the Ministers as members of the Council increased. The Prime Minister presides over the Council of Ministers; he is to be nominated by the President who conducts mandatory parliamentary consultations and shares the results with the Speaker of Parliament (Krayem 1997, 424).

Again, it should be noted that the revised aspect of the grand coalition reflects the dominant position of the Sunnis in the power configuration of post-war Lebanon in relation to the Maronites and the Shi’is. Theoretically, the Council of Ministers takes its decisions by consensus, and in the absence of consensus, decisions are taken by voting. They are taken by the simple majority of attendants, except for major issues, which require the consent of two thirds of the Council's members. The following subjects are considered major issues: the imposition and lifting of a state of emergency, war and peace, general mobilisation, international treaties and agreements, the national budget of the State, comprehensive development and long range plans, the appointment of the employees of the first category and its equivalent, a reconsideration of administrative divisions, the dissolution of Parliament, elections law, naturalisation law, personal statute laws and the dismissal of Ministers. Thus, drawing on the above, it seems to be the case that the revised formula aims at improving or strengthening the coalitional aspect of consociational politics by granting the Council of Ministers a significant amount of power. However, procedurally speaking, this has not been the case and the conduct of post-war consociational politics reflects the dominant position of the Prime Minister in his capacity as the President of the Council of Ministers, in relation to the Council. Additionally there is a tendency for the President of the Republic to exercise more power

than Ta'if's provisions dictate. Both the Maronite President of the Republic and the Sunni Prime Minister tend to bypass the power allocated to the grand coalition, i.e., the Council of Ministers, and tend to act as the real grand coalition of Lebanon (together with the Shi'i Parliament Speaker).

The third aspect of the revised grand coalition concerns the enhanced role of Parliament and the Speakership. As Krayem notes:

In Parliament, the position of the Speaker, a traditionally Shi'a post, has gained importance because the Speaker's term of office was extended to four years. In addition, Parliament has been reinforced because the number and type of cases under which the executive authority can dissolve it were set out and were limited to three rare ones (Krayem 1997, 424).

Here, it should be noted that these amendments have effectively broadened the scope of the ruling executive grand coalition (to include all significant segments, as Lijphart's consociational theory prescribes) and beyond any doubt, reflect the demographic reality on the ground, as the Shi'is are the single largest group in Lebanon. In this sense, the broadened grand coalition has dealt somewhat satisfactorily with Shi'i disenfranchisement and group exclusion, which were procedural features of the pre-war consociational model. This improvement may be said to have had a positive impact on prospects for societal stability. Hence, the grand coalition of post-war Lebanon conforms to Lijphart's concept of the grand coalition, including as it does all the significant segments of the plural society. However, the conduct of consociational politics in post-war Lebanon reflects the power of the Speaker in relation to Parliament. Thus, post-war Lebanon is actually governed by the Maronite President, the Sunni Prime Minister and the Shi'i Speaker, while Ta'if's provisions speak of a government by two institutions: the Council of Ministers as an executive institution of rule and the Parliament as a legislative institution.

3. Proportionality

With regard to proportionality, the Ta'if Agreement, for some commentators, provided a fairer representation formula of the major Lebanese sects in light of the demographic realities and new power configuration on the ground. As Hudson writes, 'Ta'if in theory restores a consociational sectarian order, albeit with salutary alterations in the power sharing formula' (Hudson 1999b, 33). While the theory of consociational democracy does not specify exact quotas for the distribution of power among the different communities, the principle of proportionality, as defined by Lijphart, is 'especially important as a guarantee for the fair representation of minority segments' (Lijphart 1995b, 278). As mentioned in Chapter 4, 'the confessional system as operated in Lebanon was set on a 6:5 ratio of Christian to Muslim; as such, it was always biased in favour of the Christian sects

much to the chagrin of the Muslim community' (Deegan 1993, 13). The Ta'if provisions remedied this situation by distributing power among the Lebanese communal groups. First, this distribution was equal between Christians and Muslims, and second, it was proportional among the sects of each of the two categories and finally it was proportional among the region. According to Krayem, 'the intention of this agreement was to eradicate the dominant position of the Maronites as it was ensured by the old formula and to allow for equitable participation of Christians and Muslims in the Cabinet' (Krayem 1997, 424). Specifically, Krayem writes that 'this parity may be observed in the system of distribution of seats in Parliament and in Grade One posts, and their equivalents in public service jobs' (Krayem 1997, 424). Thus, the old formula was amended to give way to an equal representation system. With the new fine-tuning, that is, the allocation of top offices and civil service appointments by parity of representation, the system conforms more adequately to the consociational formula in terms of proportionality, when compared with the previous formula.

However, the new formula precipitated scholarly criticism with regard to two main points. First, Salem points out, in drawing on the 1989 reforms, 'while the first tier of distribution of seats between the two religious communities is clearly defined, the second tier is rather obscure and open to different interpretations' (Salem 1991, 131 quoted in Ofeish 1999, 105). Second, these amendments led some to argue that the new formula fosters an overrepresentation of minority segments, such as the Christian and Druze communities, because the demographic map is skewed in favour of the Muslim communities, especially the Shi'ites. Thus, the principle of parity, while regulating and taking precedence over proportionality, can be seen as incompatible with the form that proportionality takes.

For instance, as Sirriyeh writes: 'The Maronites would have to accept the fact that, on the basis of the present population balance, the Muslims could claim at least an equal (if not a major) share of power in the political and economic system as well as a role for the Shi'ites consistent with their new status as the largest single community' (Sirriyeh 1989, 64). Irrespective of the underlying motives behind such statements, scholars arguing in this fashion implicitly point to the necessity of examining closely the definition of the consociational principle of proportionality. According to consociational theory, the principle of proportionality should guarantee 'the fair representation of minority segments' (Lijphart 1995b, 278). In light of this definition, the above-mentioned argument is particularly relevant since the new formula overrepresents rather than fairly represents minority segments. In other words, scholars who criticise the new model argue that just as the pre-war system was disproportionate in terms of representation, that is, the underrepresentation of Muslims, the post-war system continues to be disproportionate in terms of representation, i.e., overrepresentation of Christians. Thus, the model is seen by many as incompatible with the

principle of fair proportional representation. It is important, here, to draw attention to a number of features that impose certain limitations, and hence explain “twisting” or “bending” the proportionality principle a second time in 1989. As argued in Chapter 3, the form of government that a society develops is related to a large extent to the particular circumstances within that society.

First, the pre-war system being, in many respects, presidential, it is inadequate to assume that successful peacemaking would have been possible in 1989 had the Muslims groups insisted on a strictly fair proportional system that reflects demographic realities. As mentioned in the first section of this chapter, the local and regional contexts within which Ta’if took place did not allow for such radical changes. The urgent need to reach an agreement took precedence over the detailed form and nature of such an agreement. One cannot assume that the Christian conferees present at Ta’if would have accepted such an abrupt change, that is, from overrepresentation and presidential predominance to a fair proportional representation. Therefore, in light of this complex and tense context, strict proportional representation was not feasible, and indeed, may not have allowed successful peacemaking to take place.

Second, the above-mentioned argument takes on an unprecedented significance because although it is a known fact that Muslims constitute around sixty per cent of the total Lebanese population, the first and last official population census was conducted in 1932. Since then, successive governments have all refused, through a policy of avoidance until 1999, to carry out another census, precisely because this is one of the most “sensitive” issues in Lebanese society.¹² As Norton and Schwedler comment: ‘implicitly, the accord rejects the idea that parliamentary seats need to be reallocated periodically to adjust for disparate rates of population growth among the major confessional groups’ (Norton & Schwedler 1994, 47-8). Similarly as Nassar writes: since 1932, ‘the lack of a subsequent census update is partly due to Maronite opposition who feared that a new census would legitimize Muslim demand for reform. Estimates now reverse the order of the top three communities giving the Shiites the largest numbers with the Sunnis as second and the Maronites third’ (Nassar 1995, 249).

Moreover, although the Lebanese communal groups are usually narrowed down to two major groups and sometimes to seven major communities and two ‘secondary’ groups, Lebanon remains a multi-communal state with seventeen plural ethnic groups with crosscutting conflicting affiliations. This makes it difficult to allocate a proportional distribution of seats. Additionally, the literature on

¹² After 1999, this issue was brought up many times and the government provided a straightforward explanation of this by stating that it was “bad timing” to conduct an official census due to the “sensitive” nature of such a step. This issue will be examined in section D.2. of the present chapter.

representation systems tends to suggest that representation methods are extremely complex methods and formulas, and that no particular formula can be ideal. As regards Lebanon, parity in representation seems to have been a more practical, feasible approach. The conferees at Ta'if, especially the Shi'ites, could hardly argue for a proportional representation system, nor were they given the latitude to do so.

Third, the Maronites emerged with the feeling that they had lost the war although it is known that there is no "absolute winner" in the Lebanese civil war. Hence, they realised they had to end up with less power in the political configuration of Lebanon. This was due largely to the fact that they collaborated with the Israeli invasion and occupation. Later in 1982, Israel was forced to withdraw and the Maronites can be said to have lost the war. However, there was an overwhelming agreement that it was in the best interests of the country as a whole to put the past behind and try to reconstruct the country. This could best be achieved by proclaiming Lebanon a final homeland for all of its citizens, a unity of people, land and institutions founded on social justice and equality in rights and in duties among all citizens, without discrimination or distinction and without the segregation of people on the basis of any affiliation whatsoever. To that extent, the principle of parity was more compatible with the above-mentioned goals and without any doubt, had more appeal and feasibility than a fair and proportional representation formula. Norton and Schwedler write that 'the principle of parity provides the basis of a historic compromise meant to underscore the fact that Lebanon is a country shared by Christians and Muslims' (Norton & Schwedler 1994, 47-8) and in other words, to alleviate Maronite perceptions and fears (whether founded or not) of being engulfed in a largely Sunni area.

Having dealt with the complexities of the principle of representation of the Lebanese communal groups, it is useful at this point to draw one further distinction between the original article dealing with representation and the amended one. The amended article, Article 95, goes one step further than the original one. As with the original article and as mentioned earlier in the present chapter, the new article states that political sectarianism is intended as a provisional, transient measure and calls for its eventual elimination or abolition. Indeed, Richani comments that the 1989 Ta'if Agreement re-affirmed and reinforced the consociational aspect of the country to such an extent, that 'it may be argued that the accord laid the foundation for a sectocracy and overlooked the basic groundwork needed to build a democracy... In effect, the new regime creates a sense of déjà-vu, because Article 95 of the previous Constitution also stipulated that sectarian representation was only a temporary measure to guarantee a "just" distribution of power among sects' (Richani 1998, 146). Indeed, and as Gates stresses, 'though the 1943 National Pact called for the elimination of confessionalism, the

Khoury-Solh alliance actually permitted the institutionalisation of a sectarian system' (Gates 1998, 84).

However, the new article suggests a mechanism for eliminating political confessionalism. Indeed, it calls on Parliament to form a national commission headed by the President and containing political, intellectual and social personalities in addition to the head of Parliament and the Prime Minister. The commission's purpose is to study and recommend ways of eliminating confessionalism and presenting them to Parliament and to the Council of Ministers, as well as following up the implementation of the transitional plan. Until late 2003, such a step has not yet been taken. Although the article does not suggest a time frame for abolishing political confessionalism, it may be said that this constitutes one of the main lingering problems in the post-Ta'if era, and will be addressed in the next section. Suffice it to say that this is one of the most "sensitive" issues for Lebanese society as a whole. More importantly, however, Syria's way of getting the Lebanese Parliament to Ta'if, as well as getting the former to approve of the Ta'if formula and later to endorse it officially in the Lebanese Constitution seem to suggest that Syria effectively added legitimacy and binding authority to the sectarian confessional system of representation in order to strengthen the institutionalisation of that system. Hence, while the Ta'if Agreement was flexible enough to contain the instruments of change, i.e., provisions relating to the abolition of confessionalism (which may be implemented if the regional situation permits it), the Accord's vague wordings clearly do not commit Lebanon or Syria to any change in political system at any point in time. In other words, though a consensus on interim rule was constitutionally established, the consensus on a future order in Lebanon was couched in general terms, leaving room for each negotiator to see prospects for his particular perspective on the future order in Lebanon to prevail to some reasonable extent. It may be said that Ta'if did not offer a closed solution to the political problems of Lebanon around which discontent could easily rally. In that sense, the very regional dimension of Lebanon's future stability, the country's vulnerability to regional turbulence, its weakness in relation to its neighbours and the complex and diverse interests/objectives involved in this process are illustrated by the dynamics involved in the developments of events since the signing of the Ta'if Accord and explain why the Ta'if Agreement took a revised consociational form, that has failed in the past.

4. Segmental autonomy

As with the 1926 Lebanese Constitution, the Ta'if Agreement also touches upon the principle of segmental autonomy. While some authors argue that Ta'if's dealing with segmental autonomy springs from a concerned effort to preserve the social, cultural and religious rights of the various

communal groups, it should be said that while this may well be the case, such societal differentiation procedurally promotes separatism and tend to foster permanent fragmentation of society along communal lines, hence hindering the emergence of a class-based consciousness. The new accord states that the Lebanese Republic is founded on the respect of public liberties, the foremost of which are the freedom of opinion and belief. Additionally, the accord mentions the need to protect private education and emphasises the right of all citizens to freedom of education in accordance with the laws and regulations. More specifically, with regard to personal status codes such as religion, education, inheritance laws and the like, it is useful to look at Ofeish's discussion of Article 19 of the amended Lebanese Constitution. The original article, 'Article 19 (as modified by the constitutional law of 17 October 1927, Article 50)' states that: 'In order that a law may be promulgated, it must have been voted by the Chamber' (Bustros 1973). According to the new amended article, 'religious heads of sectarian communities are, except for the three top state leaders and ten unspecified members of Parliament, the only parties allowed to petition the Council on legal matters related to personal status, freedoms of belief, religious practice and religious education' (Ofeish 1999, 105).

The Ta'if Agreement emphasises that in order to safeguard the principle of harmony between religion and state, religious heads of the Lebanese communal groups shall have the right to consult with the Constitutional Council with regard to personal statutes, the freedom of belief and practice of religious rites and the freedom of religious education. In other words, the amended article seeks to preserve the consociational principle of segmental autonomy. More importantly, however, the article seems to be one way of allowing a heavy dose of involvement of religion in politics, not only when it comes to politically salient, but also socio-cultural issues. In the end, the amended article can be clearly seen as a way for religious leaders to keep the various communal groups under control by manipulating religious and sectarian identities, and hence a consociational tool to keep the society deeply divided along communal lines.

This hampers the secularisation attempts by civil society individuals as well as other parties and interest groups concerned, driven as they are by secular non-communally based issues. Ofeish adds here that the above-mentioned parties (religious heads of communities, the three top state leaders and ten unspecified members of Parliament), 'were provided an exclusive opportunity to influence decisions on such vital matters. Such an opportunity was not extended to civic associations or individuals, who may have a comparable interest in petitioning the Council on such matters' (Ofeish 1999, 105). Indeed, Ofeish's arguments are particularly relevant with regard to the argument that the application of the principle of segmental autonomy tends to foster societal separatism. Additionally, Zalzal reveals that although 'the Lebanese legislation that recognises 18

religious groups also states that whoever does not follow one of them can follow a civil code that will be developed for personal status, [however], the civil personal status code however, was never developed' (Zalzal 1997, 37). This can be seen as violating the constitution in an attempt to prevent the emergence of groups along lines other than communal ones.¹³

5. Mutual veto

Concerning the fourth principle of mutual veto, the Ta'if Agreement states as follows:

Any authority which contradicts the pact of communal coexistence was deemed illegitimate, emphasizing that the agreement of the various communities to live together and share power among them was the source of legitimacy for authority in Lebanon, and implying that any authority challenging the Ta'if Agreement...would be removed by force (Barak 2000, 34).

In other words, there is no legitimacy for any authority that contradicts the charter of cohabitation: 'important decisions cannot be taken by simple majority, they require consensus and compromise' (Hanf 1993, 73). Indeed, the above discussion of the political reforms points to the inability of simple voting over a significant number of issues described as 'major', which require two-thirds voting. It may be said that the undertaken political reforms make it impossible for any party to take a unilateral decision. This brings to mind the issue often addressed in this thesis, namely ensuing governmental paralysis as a result of discord. With regard to mutual veto, post-war Lebanese politics are similar to pre-war Lebanese politics.

In theory, post-Ta'if Lebanon became a parliamentary democracy. Particularly noteworthy is the emphasis of the system on the principle of separation of powers, their balance and their cooperation, which has led several observers of Lebanese politics to argue that Lebanon is a parliamentary democracy with a semi-presidential system. For instance, Krayem writes that 'due to these constitutional amendments, one may say that the political system in Lebanon has become more parliamentary although the continuation of some of the prerogatives of the President means a continuation of a semi-presidential system' (Krayem 1997, 424). This distinction that Krayem draws will be critically examined in the following section dealing with elite behaviour (elitism and troika rule) in the post-Ta'if era.¹⁴

¹³ For instance, the heated debates as to the matter of the optional civil marriage lends support to this argument.

D. Consociational politics 1990 onwards: lingering problems of consociationalism

The pre-war Lebanese experiment with consociationalism has revealed the need to introduce additional mechanisms outside the realm of consociationalism to assist the latter. In the Lebanese case, these mechanisms take the form of external arbitration. Indeed, peace, when it came, undoubtedly had a major and ongoing political commitment and military input from Syria. In post-war Lebanon, arbitration, through the clauses of the Ta'if Agreement relating to the link between Syria and Lebanon's stability, takes the form of Syrian arbitration. Syria not only effectively ended the war in Lebanon. Once the peace agreement was made, Syria, the third party, has had the interest and the capability of enforcing it. This has taken the form of Syrian assistance in the organisation of the post-war governments, both in shape and in substance. Indeed, it is strategically important to Syria that the Lebanese front be maintained calm, so as to ensure stability on the Lebanese-Israeli border and internal stability. Hence, since the consociational structure of rule (which procedural aspects reveal that a perception of national interest is difficult to come about), prevents the political system from reaching political maturity, Syria has had to play the role of the broker in post-war Lebanese politics.

1. Troika rule and elitism

Post-war Lebanon is a sectarian parliamentary democracy with a semi-presidential system and a dominant Prime Minister. In practice, the conduct of consociational politics suggests that Lebanon is actually governed by three leaders, i.e., the Maronite President, the Sunni Prime Minister and the Shi'i Speaker, hence the troika, who are the representatives of all the significant or major Lebanese communal groups and are backed by Syria. Thus, executive decision-making in post-war Lebanon conforms to Lijphart's principle, definition and form of grand coalition. Hudson's comment that 'Ta'if in practice deviated significantly from Ta'if in theory' (Hudson 1999b, 28) deserves attention as the author notes that 'executive and legislative power in post-Ta'if Lebanon is concentrated in the troika' (Hudson 1997, 119-20). Similarly, Khazen argues that 'in the assessment of key architects of Ta'if, notably former Speaker Husayn al-Husayni, Ta'if has been fundamentally derailed. Husayni saw little resemblance between the original text of Ta'if and the reality that emerged a few years later. Ta'if's new balancing act is inherently off-balance' (Khazen 2001, 45). Indeed, such comments cannot be truer. While, in fact, the Ta'if Agreement speaks of a grand coalition in the form of a collegial Ministerial body, the conduct of politics suggests that procedurally, Lebanon is governed by the troika backed by Syria. For instance, Salem points out

¹⁴ See section D.1. in this chapter.

that the power of the troika 'came, in the post-war period, to dominate the political process and to overshadow the institutional roles of the Chamber of Deputies and the Council of Ministers as collegial bodies' (Salem 1998, 16). This is not to say however, that this broad-scope collegial Ministerial body and that each Minister do not have any executive power. Rather, Ministers and the Council of Ministers might as a body act in many instances as the effective grand coalition of Lebanon, when the troika permits this, and are able to influence decision-making insofar as they are able to channel decision-making in a way that reflects a less elitist system than the pre-war consociational system.

For instance, the constitutional inability of the President of the Republic to effectively block a government decision that he does not approve of has often resulted in the President's ability to voice his position on the matter, and to see that it is effectively taken into consideration through some of the serving Ministers in office who are close to him. As a result, while there has often been paralysis at the governmental level,¹⁵ Syria's insistence that the Lebanese troika resolve their differences according to Ta'if's constitutional provisions has meant that a certain degree of executive power is frequently returned to its legitimate holders, i.e., the Council of Ministers, who have been able to channel paralysis towards a consensus of some sort on politically salient issues over which there is disagreement between the President and the Prime Minister. For instance, a recent statement by a high-ranking Syrian official read that 'any attempt to drag Syria into the small details of Lebanon's political life would fail' (DSO, 11 July 2003). In sum, Lebanon is governed by a troika, and to some extent, a Council of Ministers, both backed by a third broker party, Syria, which continuously makes efforts to assist in the implementation of consociational principles of conflict-regulation. Against this background, post-Ta'if consociationalism does not seem to be able, alone, to bring about and maintain stability in post-war Lebanon, let alone democratic stability. Rather, the consociational system of rule is held together, albeit tenuously, hence the oft-voiced argument that Lebanon is a country held-together rather than being a country that is holding together. Indeed, a number of political problems suggest that the consociational model does not work once it goes into action as consociational theory suggests, and hence, is unable to deliver on the promise of democratic stability. Some political issues which contributed to the collapse of the pre-war system remain "sensitive" issues, and thus, were not addressed, or were inadequately addressed, through a policy of avoidance, at Ta'if and afterwards.

¹⁵ In one case, one minister defended his frequent absence from Cabinet meetings by saying that: 'I am not absent but the government is. If the President and the Prime Minister are not in harmony, only secondary issues are discussed. And if they are in agreement, we just watch and hope they remain on good terms [adding that] ministers were categorised between those supporting the President and those supporting the Prime Minister, or they were lost somewhere between the two' (DSO, 8 September 2003).

Although elite rule in post-Ta'if Lebanon has procedurally turned into troika rule, this may be seen as a positive manifestation only when compared to the pre-war system, which procedurally brought accommodation to the politically dominant position of the Maronite President and remained extremely elitist when compared to the current elitist system of rule. Hence, the broadened coalition of the new system in scope and in substance suggests a better organisation and division of power and rule. However, the conduct of politics reveals a number of political problems. First, the fact that legislative power, in terms of Parliament has been strengthened does not automatically translate into the effective ability of Parliament to exercise its powers. Indeed, the present discussion has shown that such power was brought to the dominant position of the Speaker within Parliament. Additionally, while the Speakership belongs to the Shi'i community, it cannot be said that the Speakership in effect represents the interests of the majority of the Shi'i community, as most critics argue. Rather, the Speaker tends to use his dominant position within the political system to represent and preserve the interests of his close associates (who are most often but not always Shi'i), failing in the process to protect the interests and rights of the majority of his community. This is not to say however, that if the speaker was adhering to consociational politics and effectively representing the interests of the majority of his community, such an organisation of political rule would be salutary. Rather, it is to suggest that, not only is the consociational system a theoretically inappropriate way of organising political rule in plural societies, it is being implemented procedurally by the post-war Lebanese elites in an ineffective way (i.e., it is not working at promoting social and political stability). This applies not only to the speaker but also to the premier and the various top office holders or poles of power.

Second, the fact that the executive powers of the Council of Ministers have been enhanced has not translated into the effective ability of the Council to use its executive powers as prescribed by the Ta'if Agreement. Rather, procedurally, the amount of executive power that the Council enjoys has been brought to the dominant position of the Sunni Prime Minister. Again, it would be incorrect to assume that the Prime Minister, as some critics maintain, protects and preserves the rights and interests of the majority of the Sunni community he belongs to. Rather, the procedural manifestations of consociationalism suggest that he caters effectively for the rights and interests of his close business associates, as the Shi'i Speaker tends to do. As a result, he fails in the process to cater for the rights and interests of the majority of the Sunni community. Against this background, Lijphart's argument regarding the ability of the grand coalition of elites to satisfactorily represent and protect the vital interests and rights of the various communal groups seems problematic. As Richani reveals, 'the sectarian system compels sects and their representatives to engage in a struggle for resources that keeps the polity polarized and the political process in a state of turmoil' (Richani 1998, 146-7). This is particularly true in the light of the scarce material resources available

to the state. Invariably, the troika conflict is over the government's approval of a division of spoils, positions and funds. This results in a complete governmental paralysis, and increases mobilisation at the mass level. Additionally, it should be noted that even if the three heads of state attempt to represent the interests of the various communities they belong to, this may not necessarily translate into a similar treatment and dealing with these communal political, economic and social rights as the structure of the system suggests that these rights can only be dealt with according to the dominant position of a leader, and not according to the higher ideal of equal treatment.

Third, the fact that Ta'if removed executive power from the President to the Council of Ministers and the Prime Minister has translated into the former's continuous attempt to enhance his position vis-à-vis the Council of Ministers and the Prime Minister. For instance, Mansour, (referring to President Hrawi though this can also be applied to the president currently in office, President Lahoud) notes that the President of the Republic has been reluctant, since the first day he was elected, to relinquish the rights that the Ta'if Agreement has already annulled and that the pre-war system had granted him. According to Mansour, this can be seen as an example of the President trying to still exercise effectively the executive powers of the unwritten elite understandings that the 1943 National Pact speaks of (Mansour 1993, 204). Indeed, Mansour's treatment of this issue extends throughout a four-page commentary on the president's violation of the Ta'if Agreement through his insistent refusal to "only" play the role that the accord has allocated to the President of the Republic which has resulted in political tensions that necessitate continuous Syrian intervention in the form of arbitration among conflicting parties (Mansour 1993, 204-7).¹⁶ Specifically, Krayem advances this argument by writing that 'one may mention the insistence of the President of the Republic on attending, and thus presiding, over every meeting of the Council of Ministers in order to assert that he still has control over the executive power' (Krayem 1997, 427).

According to the Ta'if provisions, the President of the Republic chairs the Council of Ministers at his discretion without voting however. In other words, if present, the President heads the meetings of the Council of Ministers. Here, Krayem remarks that, although the post-Ta'if political system is a parliamentary "democracy", it is also in many respects, a semi-presidential system. In this sense, the procedural aspects of the Presidency as an institution, i.e., the behaviour of the President, reveal that the behaviour of the President effectively deviates from the consociational provisions of the Ta'if Agreement and hence, suggests that the procedural manifestations of consociationalism allow a

¹⁶ Translated from Arabic. Similarly to Mansour, Sa'egh more recently devotes 18 pages of his book solely to the insistence of the President to exercise his annulled prerogatives and stresses the tension between the constitutional amendments and the new customs, i.e., procedural aspects in which Ta'if is being implemented. For such an account, see Dawoud el Sa'egh, *Al Nizām al Loubnani fī thawābitihī wa tahawoulatihī*. 'The Lebanese system in its constancy and transformation. Beirut: Dar An-Nahar lil Nachr, 2000, pp.47-63.

deviation and violation of consensual elite behaviour, upon which the whole logic of consociational theory is built. As Reinkowski points out, the troika is 'an example of distorted consociationalism' (Reinkowski 1997, 500).

However, had this post-war elitist system, been able to ensure smooth coalitional politics and consensual behaviour among the troika despite being distorted, its advantages could have been extolled, as compared to the extremely elitist pre-war system of rule. Rather, a crucial problem in post-war Lebanon is the governance crisis that the political system exhibits. Indeed, the elites are facing problems in governing the country. Hence, the troika engages more often than not in adversarial behaviour, despite Syria's continuous arbitrary efforts to regulate conflicts among them and Syria's constant reminder that the amended constitution of the Ta'if Agreement should satisfactorily regulate elite behaviour according to the accord's provisions. Hence, the conflictual behaviour of the troika indicates that the procedural aspects of consociationalism are in no way an effective conflict-regulating mechanism, as the process of politics allows consociational constitutional provisions to be curtailed and bypassed. Haddad, for example, writes that 'instead of coordinating the power-sharing process and ensuring a proper implementation of the constitution, the three top political officials in the country monopolize decision-making in the country and representation of their respective communities' (Haddad 2000, 467).

More importantly, the fact that the procedural aspects of post-war politics allow conflict to emerge frequently among the top executives (despite the salutary conflict-regulating role the Council of Ministers has played at times) indicates the need for additional conflict regulating mechanisms, as the internal logic of consociationalism (which hinges on elites) appears inherently flawed. In the case of Lebanese consociationalism, this takes the form of external arbitration, another form of conflict-regulation mechanism for plural societies in the conflict-regulation literature. Looking at the troika relationship in the successive post-Ta'if governments, it would be more appropriate to speak of Syrian imposed and forced cohabitation between the senior players (top leaders) rather than peaceful coexistence (which indicates a semblance of stability). Hence, consociationalism is, as Halpern notes, an expressly hopeful theory, and requires additional mechanisms to function properly. Describing post-war elites, Khashan writes that they first 'lack the pertinent training and predisposition. Second, they are largely corrupt' and 'third, the elites are not sincere about attenuating the differences among the Lebanese' (Khashan 1992, 172). Indeed, looking at the behaviour of the troika, Faour notices that 'periodically, disputes rage between any two of the ruling triumvirate known in Lebanon as the "troika". As a result, operations at some public agencies and/or the Parliament become paralyzed, raising doubts about the durability and strength of cooperation among the leaders of the three major religious sects' (Faour 1998, 53).

Under such a system of rule, what are the prospects for Lebanese consociationalism to deliver on the promise of democratic stability? The stability of the system depends largely on the level of entente and cooperation between the three top state leaders. On a comparative basis, while the stability of the system in pre-war Lebanon depended on the President of the Republic, with executive power lying in his hands, the stability of the post-war system depends on troika cooperation, where executive decision-making lies. Thus, while Sirriyeh's observation that 'at present, the stability of this relationship is contingent upon the personalities of the three top leaders just as the success of the National Pact depended upon the working relationship between Bishara al-Khoury and Riad al-Solh' (Sirriyeh 1997, 114) is particularly relevant, three other dimensions should be taken into consideration in order to assess the ability of the present model to generate democratic stability.

First, Ta'if, by reorganising the division of power among the grand coalition, has broadened the latter in substance and in shape. Indeed, the executive power of the Council of Ministers contributes to a certain extent to stability as the grand coalition may be said to have been broadened in scope and in power. Second, the procedural power that the Speaker has acquired, coupled with the fact that he rules together with the other two top leaders, represent more adequately the position of the significant Lebanese communal groups, as opposed to the pre-war system. Third, Syria's continuous commitment and support to keep Lebanon stable, Syria's power to restrain the procedural attempts by the various top leaders to enhance their positions at the expense of others (which effectively brings the troika to respect constitutional provisions, hence returning executive power to its legitimate holders, the Council of Ministers) and Syria's constant reminder to the elites as to what the national interest is about all contribute to keeping Lebanon stable.

On the other hand however, Hoss's argument that 'the attempt of each President, as a representative of his confessional community, to enhance his position and his prerogatives' so as to pursue narrow sectarian and economic interests has involved the emergence of 'many different interpretations of the way to implement the Agreement' (Krayem 1997, 426). In this respect, Sirriyeh writes that:

On the political level, there is a need to reestablish a clear basis for a more stable relationship between the three top leaders of the country... A clear statement of the powers of each post and their limitation is still needed in order to guarantee the stability of the relationship over the longer term... The stability of this relationship is probably more important than that of the Cabinet because the three leaders represent the three most important confessional communities in the country, whereas disagreements in the Cabinet are likely to occur as in coalition governments of parliamentary systems (Sirriyeh 1997, 114).

One criticism to mention relating Sirriyeh's observations is that conflicts in the Cabinet are almost always a reflection of the ongoing disagreement between the President and the Prime Minister, with

each Minister taking one of the two sides or refraining from attending a futile Cabinet meeting, which would not adopt any decision so long as the President and the Prime Minister are in disagreement. Hence, while this illustrates the President's violation of Ta'if's provisions, it also suggests that procedural aspects allow such a violation, by stripping the Council of Ministers from its executive powers. In any case, disagreements in the Cabinet that Sirriyeh mentions are occurring precisely because the President and the Prime Minister are having difficulty reaching agreement, and would probably not occur had consociationalism contained the effective institutional structure that would prevent the President from violating consociational rules. In the end however, no attempt in that direction, namely the establishing of a clear basis for the three leaders' relationship, has been made since this issue, because of its sensitivity for the Maronite President and his close associates and to some extent the Maronite community (including the Maronite Patriarch, Nasrallah Sfeir), is likely to lead to political turmoil.

Thus, successive governments continuously adopt a policy of avoidance with regard to this matter and Syria has also been keen to avoid any attempt to clarify the Ta'if provisions so as not to antagonise the Maronite President. Rather, Syria, had it wanted to, would have been able to provide and lay down a clear basis for the troika relationship within the Ta'if provisions. However, because of the sensitivity of this matter, this author argues that the provisions were purposefully left open to interpretation so as to allow a flexible adoption of consociational practices to suit Syrian interests and hence, justify deviations from the consociational model that may arise as a result of new conditions imposed by a crisis situation. Indeed, Syria wanted to avoid an inflexible formula, such as the inflexible pre-war institutionalisation of consociational principles that led to the collapse of the system.

Therefore, the level of entente or "mécontentement" among the three Presidents is possible because of the absence of effective state institutions. Indeed, the fact that, just as in pre-war consociational Lebanon, the post-Ta'if institutions of governance are human institutions seems to suggest that elite confrontational behaviour is possible, at the Cabinet level, the presidential level and in Parliament, hence heightening sectarian tensions and increasing mobilisation at the mass level, hence making it difficult for Lebanese consociationalism to generate democratic stability. Put more aptly by Krayem, 'in practice, the understanding among these three Presidents as individuals has come to mean that the three institutions, as institutions, have paled in importance. This contradicts the fundamental purpose of the Agreement, which was to replace the rule of the individual (the President), by the rule of the institutions' (Krayem 1997, 426).

In the end however, the troika continues to weaken and relegate to second degree the role of state institutions, despite the emergence of new political institutions in post-war Lebanon. As a result, the latter remain weak and subject to sectarian manipulations by traditional leaders. This gives the impression that the government is not hanging together. For instance, Salam writes that 'central government fragmentation cripples state authority' stating that the 'Ta'if troika is the best example' (Salam 1993, 77).¹⁷ Additionally, troika predominance in governing the country violates the principle of separation of powers. According to the (amended) Article 5, the system is founded on the principle of separation of powers, their balance and their cooperation. Here, Sleiman points out that the troika system currently dominating Lebanese politics 'is incompatible with the separation of powers principle and leads to a double paralysis of Parliament and Cabinet at the same time' (Sleiman 1994, 83).¹⁸

2. Confessional representation

While the section dealing with proportional representation under the new revised consociational system has indicated the difficulty of devising representation structures that satisfy and adequately represent the various sectarian groupings in Lebanon, and has indicated that the literature on representation systems tends to point to this difficulty, the discussion also stresses that the new representation system is more adequate and fair than the previous pre-war system. However, this is not to say that the present representation system is more able to contribute towards the prevention of the outbreak of communal conflict. Rather, the Maronites and the Shi'is, as well as the Armenian communities continuously voice their resentment and perceived feelings of marginalisation as to the representation system in place. Whether such grievances are legitimate or not is difficult to determine, as consociational theory speaks of the fair representation of communal groups. Indeed, representation systems almost always fail to satisfy everyone because it is not clear whether representation should reflect demographic strength or power on the ground, and more importantly, because the first and last population census was conducted in 1932. However, it is important for the present discussion to mention such grievances, irrespective of their legitimacy, because societal and communal resentment as a result of such feelings is bound to disturb the stability of the so-called consociational "peace". Additionally, combined with the fact that successive post-Ta'if governments have used and manipulated electoral laws to ensure the election of traditional sectarian notables, the resulting societal and communal resentment may be seen as a significant source of

¹⁷ Numerous scholars addressed this particular issue. For the most notable critiques, see Mahmood Monshipouri, *Democratisation, liberalization and Human Rights in the Third world*. London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1995, p.33 and Michael C. Hudson, 'Lebanon after Ta'if: another reform opportunity lost?'. *Arab Studies Quarterly* (Winter), Vol.21, No.1, pp.27-40, 1999b, p.31.

¹⁸ Translated from French.

societal instability. Moreover, one feature illustrating the fragility of the confessional consociational system currently in place is the reluctance of all pre-war and post-war governments to conduct a population census, so as not to stir the fears and anxieties of demographically weak minority groups and prompt demographically strong majority groups to demand a change in the representational system in place.

Thus, the consociational system, through a considerable degree of separatism and societal mutual distrust that it generates among the communal groups reduces prospects for stability. More importantly, the consociational system makes it difficult for the government to undertake one of the most basic functions of any government. Indeed, by placing so much emphasis on confessional representation, the workings of the Lebanese consociational system suggest that it is difficult for the political system to reach political maturity. This is illustrated by successive government policy of avoiding dealing with sensitive issues. As to the sensitive character of the population census, Maktabi writes that 'the political unwillingness of making an official updated census to the last one in 1932 represents some important factors that defy basic principles of democratic governance' (Maktabi 1998). Indeed, successive governments since 1932 have unanimously declined to conduct a population census. Between 1932 and 1975, this can be seen as understandable, since the pre-war system was presidential. In other words, the Maronite President was in a sufficiently dominant political position to afford to ignore Muslim grievances, as a population census would illustrate Muslim demographic preponderance. Thus, it would question the appropriateness of the 6:5 ratio of confessional representation, which favored the Christians. Therefore, in the light of continuous Muslim demands to redress confessional representation, the dominant position of the President led to the avoidance of a population census. Indeed, as Salibi stresses, the idea of a census 'was unacceptable to the Christians in power', even if it were a census for reform and development planning without classifying the population by religion and sect. This was made possible because 'by controlling the vital registration system, Maronite public officers were able never to disclose or publish data on the birth and death rates of the various sects. Nor have they released the number of citizens registered by religion' (Faour 1991, 631). Faour furthermore writes that several other steps have been taken by Maronites, dominant in state administration, not to make public the demographic data regarding religious groups. In such a way, Muslim demands could be ignored since there would be no official data on which they could base their demands.

As a result of this situation, 'various religious groups collected and published data of dubious value because of the intention of each group was to exaggerate its size for political purposes' (Faour 1991, 632-3), a situation that largely exists today. While during the war, numerous private institutions and research centres conducted different studies to determine the new demographic

realities, it is obviously inadequate to conduct an official population census in the midst of violence and killing, communal displacement and massive migration. After the war, however, the continued governmental policy of avoidance does not seem to fulfil any relevant objective, especially since it is no secret that the demographic balance is skewed in favor of the Muslims, mostly the Shi'ites. Additionally, the fact that 'the [currently adopted] principle of parity provides the basis of a historic compromise meant to underscore the fact that Lebanon is a country shared by Christians and Muslims' (Norton & Schwedler 1994, 47-8) should alleviate Christian fears of being politically engulfed in a predominantly Muslim area. The principle of parity should alleviate Christian fears, especially the Maronites, since it clearly preserves minority rights and overrepresents minority groups in the system through constitutional provisions. Thus, despite the fact that in the Second Republic, as far as the power relations that exist in the process of rule, the Maronites have lost out in the Taif Accord, the constitutionally preserved principle of parity should alleviate Maronite fears. However, this is not the case as Maronites continuously express their fears and feelings of alienation from the system. On a comparative basis, Maronite fears seem ill-founded, as Maronites are represented at the troika level by the President of the Republic, who is still exercising some of the pre-war prerogatives that the Ta'if accord has cancelled. For example, and in comparison to the Maronites, the Christian Orthodox seem to feel less fearful and less alienated although they are not represented at the troika level. Indeed, the highest public office position allocated to the Orthodox communal group is at the level of Deputy Prime Minister. Thus, Maronite fears can be traced back to their pre-war politically dominant position and their separatist and isolationist tendencies, as they significantly contributed towards giving an identity to Lebanon. As Haddad writes: 'the Maronites closely associated themselves with resistance...By contrast, the Lebanese Greek Orthodox...believe the survival of their community could best be ensured by a variety of means of accommodation, including strong support for secular politics' (Haddad 1985, 9).

In sum, the principle of parity appears to be the most stable and equitable mode of representation. Moreover, although the pre-war governments avoided conducting a population census, the balance of the First Republic was upset when the civil war broke out, partly because of demographic changes and Muslim demands for an equal share of power were ignored. Thus, avoiding conducting a population census in pre-war Lebanon will not help maintain the balance of the Second Republic and does not fulfil any particular objective. This is reasonable as average estimates of the current demographic realities are known. Indeed, a number of private institutions recently conducted statistical surveys relating to social and economic issues in order to implicitly unveil the new demographic realities. Against this background, the reluctance of the post-Ta'if governments to undertake a population census illustrates their extraordinary weaknesses in implementing domestic policies. For instance, while Shil's observation that 'even curiosity to know the truth about the

confessional composition of the population must be kept in check in order to avoid the provocation of group rivalries and the anxieties which these would stimulate' (Shils 1966, 4) goes back to the 1960s, the situation is pretty much the same today, hence illustrating government weakness. Additionally, in the process, the absence of an official population census has allowed 'political manipulation by leaders of both communities [Christian and Muslim]' (Halpern 1984, 123). This fosters mutual fear and suspicion and hampers the emergence of a socially-based movement based on class-consciousness, rather than communal consciousness. In sum, governmental avoidance, coupled with the outdated character of the Lebanese administration, points to the weakness of state institutions. As with earlier governmental policies, the assumption of the ruling grand coalition is that ignoring the problem will lead to its elimination. However, conducting a census would help different groups come to terms with the new demographic map and attempt to deal with the changed demography constructively and realistically. Currently, the governmental policy of avoidance encourages separatism, contributes to dividing the Lebanese, reveals the weakness of the state and allows communal identities to be manipulated and politicised. Against this background, the post-war consociational structure of rule, as with the pre-war one, is unlikely to generate democratic stability.

E. Consociational politics 1990 onwards: manifestations of Lebanese society

The previous discussion has shown that Lebanon still faces many political problems that have a direct bearing on economic and societal stability. Here, it is crucial to mention that these problems are not necessarily a new manifestation of the revised Ta'if formula. Rather, they existed before the breakdown of pre-war Lebanese political system in 1975 and contributed to the outbreak of the civil war. To put it simply, they only took on a different form under the new formula of the post-war system. The re-establishment of consociational principles and the conduct of consociational politics seem to suggest the presence of a certain degree of societal and economic instability. This has the effect of casting doubt upon the ability of the consociational model to work as consociational theory suggests, in that democratic stability can only emerge with difficulty in present-day Lebanon. Ofeish writes as follows: 'the new regime has not yet resolved the lingering causes of the civil war as promised in the 1990 preamble to the Constitution' (Ofeish 1999, 113).¹⁹ Put more aptly in the words of Khalaf, Ta'if 'rests on a grievous delusion: that recutting the political pie will cause economic disparities and sociocultural differences to disappear' (Khalaf 1994, 276). Indeed, post-

¹⁹ For similar comments, see Samir Khalaf, 'Culture, collective memory and the restoration of civility'. In Deirdre Collings, eds. *Peace for Lebanon? From war to reconstruction*, pp.273-86. London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1994, pp.275-6 and Latif Abul-Husn, *The Lebanese conflict- looking inward*. London: Lynne Rienner [Canberra Studies on Peace Research and Conflict Analysis], 1998, p.131.

war Lebanese society has a number of features that result from political instability. The discussion will now turn to the detrimental impacts that political instability causes to societal stability.

1. Socio-cultural constraints

Despite 'much good will and nationalistic fervor' (Ayoub 1994, 241); the resilience of civil society in Lebanon (demonstrated during the long civil war); the Syrian commitment to stabilise the Lebanese front; a salutary revised consociational formula; and an emergent, significantly unanimous and publicly-stated desire of the Lebanese to coexist together peacefully within the current internationally-recognised boundaries of Lebanon, national integration is still an unfulfilled objective, there is no agreement as to what national interest constitutes, clientelism and corruption are widespread, elites are still deeply divided seeking outside protection to buttress their position locally, sectarian divisions have sharpened in post-war Lebanon, the Lebanese continue to view themselves firstly as members of communal groups rather than citizens and have so far failed to develop a popular class-based consciousness. Khalaf goes as far as arguing that the Lebanese are now going through a phase of retribalisation. Thus, the ability of the post-war consociational system to generate democratic stability is seriously questioned.

When it comes to heightened sectarian divisions, observers of post-Ta'if Lebanese politics point to the presence of a communal malaise in post-war Lebanon. Asmar, Kisirwani and Springborg reveal in their study that 'political attitudes and behaviour do appear to be diverging on the basis of sects' (Asmar, Kisirwani & Springborg 1999, 61). In another study, Daïf, Esber and Maïla write: 'never has confessional behaviour been so widespread. Political communal cleavages have increased and are reinforced. Epidemic mistrust exists between communities' (Daïf, Esber & Maïla 1996, 73).²⁰ Here, it is important to say that the consociational model, however adequate the new formula is in terms of representation and however salutary outside support is (i.e., Syrian arbitration), significantly contributes to this communal malaise. Reinkowski, for instance, observes that 'the main danger is that the consociationalist model confessionalises even conflicts that are in themselves originally not confessional at all' (Reinkowski 1997, 506). Indeed, almost all issues in Lebanon, ranging from political representation to issues that are not politically salient such as sports competitions, are a matter of sectarian perception and have the potential to ignite communal conflict

²⁰ Translated from French. Similar accounts have emerged in the literature on post-Ta'if Lebanon. For such accounts, see Michael Hudson, 'Trying again: power-sharing in post-civil war Lebanon'. *International Negotiation* Vol.2, No.1, pp.103-22, 1997, pp.116-117; Eyal Zisser, Review article: 'The silent revolution in Lebanon: changing values of the youth'. *Middle Eastern Studies* (July), Vol.37, No.3, pp.211-3, 2001, p.212; Nawaf A. Salam, 'Deconfessionalizing the call for deconfessionalization'. *Beirut Review* (Fall), Vol.6, pp.75-8, 1993, p.76 and Augustus Richard Norton, 'Lebanon's malaise'. *Survival* (Winter), Vol.42, No.4, pp.35-50. London: Brassey's for International Institute of Strategic Studies, 2001, p.43.

that may develop into violent conflict. As a result, Reinkowski's arguments that 'consociational democracy prevented democratic practices within the confessional groups and neglected the potential plurality and flexibility of the Lebanese society' (Reinkowski 1997, 506) are particularly relevant for the present discussion. Such observations have questioned the argument made by modernisation theorists that a considerable impetus for change is usually found in the modernisation processes underway and have led to research on this matter by observers of Lebanese politics. Hudson's comment that 'in Lebanon, modernization does not mean destroying the old but simply adding the new' (Hudson 1969, 255) is pertinent, and has recently been echoed by a number of sociologists and experts on Lebanese politics.²¹ For instance, Haddad points out that 'the Lebanese are remarkable in their ability to modernize their approaches to all forms of business and professional practices, but equally remarkable in their resistance to modernization of political and administrative practices' (Haddad 1985, 150-1). Most worrying however is the inability of the Lebanese to identify along class-lines, despite rampant poverty and the gradual eradication of the Lebanese middle class, which forms the basis of social stability. As early as 1989, Humphrey notices that 'the civil war failed to redefine political allegiance radically from sect to class, or even a secular-nationalism' (Humphrey 1989, 5). Today, more than a decade later, this situation is pretty much the same.

Indeed, despite the war, the new formula has not provided the Lebanese with a sense of citizenship. Writing in 1996, Salamé stresses Edmond Rabbath's concept of the Lebanese as 'individual subjects', 'confined in their confessions' and 'forbidden to exist politically outside their confessional groups' (Salamé 1996b, 99). Similarly, Daïf, Esber and Maïla argue in 1996 that 'the confessional community has become a tribe' (Daïf, Esber & Maïla 1996, 68), hence bringing to mind Khalaf's concept of retribalisation that the Lebanese are going through. Here, it should be noted that the grand coalition and the elites in general are manipulating circumstances that lead to cooperation among the various communal groups. The grand coalition does not have any willingness to help in the emergence of any manifestation of national unity, as this will lead to the emergence of a class-based social movement that will seek to challenge the existing elitist system of rule. At the same time, the elites themselves are not immune from such manipulation as they continuously seek outside protection and intervention to buttress their position within the system. Dajani, in his study of Lebanese media concludes that his examination 'points out that state legislation in the area of television broadcasting were aimed at allowing government officials and

²¹ For the results of such studies, see Hudson, Michael C. (1969). 'Democracy and social mobilisation in Lebanese politics'. *Comparative Politics* Vol.1, pp.245-63, 1969, p.255; Hassan al Khatib, *The general factors for the collapse of democracy in Lebanon*. Hassan al Khatib Eds, 1994, p.119; Wadi Haddad, *Lebanon: the politics of revolving doors*, (the Washington Papers/114). Washington D.C.: Praeger with the Centre for Strategic and International Studies

the ruling political bosses to exploit this medium for their own political goals' (Dajani 2001).²² Needless to say, such a governmental organisation of society lends support to the argument that the elites are manipulating and politicising communal loyalties. This thus suggests a permanent fragmentation of Lebanese society along communal, sectarian, ideological and territorial/geographical lines.

When it comes to education, this takes on an unprecedented importance, and plays a crucial role in moving a country towards national fusion and democratic enlightenment. In the Lebanese context, the pre-war Lebanese system, in conformity with the consociational principle of segmental autonomy, encouraged the emergence of multiple belief-systems, by institutionalising the rights of the different communal groups to run their own schools and ideological, educational and cultural instruments. This worked at sharpening the polarisation among the communal groups. For instance, Kliot writes that 'one of the greatest failures of the Lebanese society was its inability to establish a unifying educational and cultural belief-system. The Lebanese educational and cultural system encouraged sectarian schisms and separatist trends among the various religious communities' (Kliot 1987, 58). The Ta'if Agreement clearly indicated the need for education reforms, and stipulated a number of provisions in this regard that the present discussion will address (The Beirut Review 1991b, 165). First, the Accord states that education should be put at the disposal of people and made obligatory, at least at the elementary stage. Other objectives relate to emphasising the freedom of education in accordance with the laws and regulations, protecting private education and strengthening state control over private schools and the school textbook. Equally important are the aims of reviewing and developing the curricula in a manner that strengthens national cohesiveness and fusion and spiritual and cultural openness, as well as unifying the textbook in history and civil education courses. In addition, the Accord calls for a rehabilitation of formal, vocational and technical education, to strengthen it and develop it in such a manner as to fulfil and to suit the developmental and constructive needs of the nation. Finally, the Accord stipulates the principle of rehabilitating the Lebanese University and supporting it, especially in its applied faculties. Thus, the Ta'if Accord provisions are commendable.

However, the implementation of the Ta'if provisions here is deficient. First, Inati argues that in light of the important role that education plays in shaping political and social ideas, one reform that the government undertook has the disadvantage of heightening communal tension. As Inati writes, 'the

[Georgetown University], 1985, pp.150-1 and Samir Khalaf, *Civil and uncivil violence in Lebanon. A history of the internationalization of communal conflict*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2002, pp.26-8.

²² For similar accounts also regarding the failure of the post-war emergence of a 'broadcasting system which can both reunite Lebanese society whilst reflecting its diversity', see S.A. Maarabouni, 'Ideological diversity and the

new [public] system does not promote the teaching of religion at any level' (Inati 1999, 63), whereas private schools have the freedom to provide religious teaching. The author argues that:

The Lebanese government seems to have the idea that, if religion is not taught, religion will go away and therefore, the "sectarian problem" in Lebanon will evaporate. But keeping people ignorant about their religion and that of their compatriots will not help create more understanding than keeping them informed, and will therefore not facilitate but worsen communication among them (Inati 1999, 64).

Indeed, Inati's argument is particularly relevant, especially now that student enrollment in public schools has increased exponentially because of the deteriorating economic situation. Second, with regard to the history textbook designed to promote the unification of the Lebanese, this matter was subject to controversial debate. It is only very recently that the book in question was written and made public, after more than a decade of intense deliberations. Second, heated academic and at the same time sectarian-oriented discussions during its writing continuously postponed the process of unifying the history book. Third, these discussions escalated into conflicts at the elite level. Minor wording differences led to complete governmental paralysis. As a result, the book mainly provides a censored, vague account of the Lebanese war's causes and events. In addition, most private schools have refused to include the unified history book in the curricula while this is not the case in public schools. Clearly, this contributes to keeping the divided society more divided, hence hampering prospects for democratic stability. Here, Walzer suggests that 'consociations can teach a minimalist curriculum, one that is focused on an often sanitized history of communal coexistence and cooperation and on the institutions through which these are realized' (Walzer 1997, 72-3). Walzer's description does not appear to promote the socio-cultural unification of divided societies. Rather, where applied to Lebanon, Walzer's suggestions clearly advocate avoiding the real causes of the Lebanese war, and hence, keeping society divided along sectarian lines. Thus, they do not seem commendable. Finally, the social fragmentation of the Lebanese along communal identities is illustrated by the Christian, and particularly the Maronites' initial refusal to allow the government to unify the Lebanese University within one campus that geographically/territorially unites all Lebanese, hence pointing out the considerable degree of communal divisions at the student body level. In sum, it can be said that prospects for societal stability are hampered by the divisive character of the educational system in Lebanon, which, like the pre-war schooling system, contributes to keeping Lebanese society more divided. More importantly, it clearly highlights the weakness of the state in promoting and imposing a unification strategy. Educational matters are subject to sectarian and religious interventions, thus curtailing any role for the state, however minimal.

Indeed, there is a wide scholarly consensus that neither the fifteen years of civil war nor the new constitution have brought about, whether at the elite or mass levels, national reconciliation, crucial for the emergence of a national identity. Norton writes here that 'reconciliation, despite commendable initiatives, is as yet, only a slogan' (Norton 2001, 43). According to Kassir, the present leaders of post-Ta'if Lebanon avoid any discussion of the war in order to maintain themselves in power (Kassir 2000, 15).²³ Indeed, the elites avoid making efforts towards the emergence of national reconciliation, so as to keep the society divided. In times of minor crises, the elite in post-war Lebanon claim that national reconciliation can best be achieved by forgetting and ignoring the issues that divide the Lebanese. Thus, instead of irretrievably addressing the real problems that led to the civil war, the elite continuously suggest that national reconciliation can be achieved when the Lebanese think only of the issues that bring them together. This best illustrates the continued policy of avoidance discussed in previous parts of this thesis.

Here, it should be acknowledged that the issues uniting the Lebanese help fostering national reconciliation, a requirement for the emergence of Lebanese nationalism. However, the issues dividing the Lebanese are equally important in hampering the reconciliation process, especially if they continue to be avoided. Although addressing such issues constitutes a potential threat to the stability of the system, especially for the Maronites, leaving them unresolved further complicates the reconciliation process. For instance, Young warns that 'at some stage however, this may lead to a breakdown in internal cohesion in Lebanon vis-à-vis the region, much in the same way it did in 1958 and after 1967' (Young 1993, 119). Similarly, Salibi believes that 'without an honest recounting of its history...Lebanon will lack the social solidarity necessary for it to be a viable state' (Norton 1990, 318). Kassir, meanwhile, suggests that Lebanon should engage in a truth and justice mission as South Africa did. Hence, if such issues are adequately addressed as a national concern, rather than brought up in times of crises to justify narrow sectarian interests, this might move forward the reconciliation process (especially among the Maronites and the Druze) and foster the emergence of a national identity. As a result, socio-cultural constraints, coupled with the emphasis that post-Ta'if consociational system puts on confessionalism, contribute to hamper the emergence of democratic stability in Lebanon.

2. Socio-economic constraints

Perhaps most damaging for the prospects of the emergence of democratic stability are the socio-economic inequalities that post-war Lebanese society suffers from. Likewise, economic prosperity,

Keele University, 1991.

²³ Translated from French.

if possible and readily available, would act as a significantly positive factor with regard to the stability of the country, in the sense that it would assist the existing consociational mechanisms in delivering on the promise of democratic stability. In the words of the noted Saidi, 'economic recovery and growth can act as the single most important unifying force in restoring Lebanon's battered national fabric' (Saidi 1994, 195-6). By the same token, class-based inequalities are more damaging to the stability of the system than is the case with socio-cultural constraints. Not only do such inequalities block prospects for democratic stability, they seriously threaten societal stability and may very possibly lead to the outbreak of conflict. However, any serious attempt to assess the danger that socio-economic inequalities pose on the stability of the system cannot be undertaken without first looking in detail at the political economy of post-Ta'if Lebanon, i.e., the persisting strong linkages that exist among the economy and political structure of Lebanese society. From the outset, one positive manifestation of post-war Lebanese society, as per the distribution of economic power within it deserves attention, as this new trend suggests a salutary move towards a more homogeneous and integrated society. Nasr notes that in 1960:

75 percent of the economic upper class in Lebanon had been Christian and only 25 percent Muslim [while in post-war Lebanon], a very significant number of the entrepreneurial class is Muslim, with a vested interest in the stabilization of the system and in the development of its economy, [and this] may thus be taken in a more positive light (Nasr 1993, 73). Another promising byproduct of this burgeoning Christian-Muslim re-equilibration in the upper economic strata is the increased number of associations between Christian and Muslim capital (Nasr 1993, 74).²⁴

While this situation is seen as a salutary step towards the homogenisation of society, it should not, however, translate into an optimistic scenario for prospects of Lebanese stability. Faour, in mentioning this increasing re-equilibration or balancing of economic power among Christians and Muslims, concludes that 'yet most of them [the economic entrepreneurial class] are supporters or friends of one or more of the ruling triumvirate' (Faour 1998, 61). Indeed, Faour's statement cannot be truer in the light of the strong linkages that have traditionally existed, and continue to exist, among the economic and political elite of Lebanon. For example, Hamdan points out that 'political economy is so dependent on sectarian economy' (Hamdan 2000, 79)²⁵ and the noted Corm writes: 'the governments of National Unity that have been in power since the end of 1990 have forged an economic alliance between wealthy Lebanese contractors...and the new wealthy political establishment...Given the new business elite's strong influence on and considerable participation in the government, there is now minimal control over whether the large and powerful private sector distorts to dangerous levels the distribution of income across society' (Corm 1998b, 119).

²⁴ For similar and more recent accounts, see Muhammad Faour, The silent revolution in Lebanon: changing values of the youth. Beirut: American University of Beirut, 1998, p.61.a

²⁵ Translated from French.

However, compared with the pre-war system where Muslims, mostly the Shi'is, were underprivileged in relation to Christians, the new post-Ta'if situation seems better equipped to prevent the outbreak of communal conflict. Hence, despite the relevance of Hudson's comment that in Lebanon, 'acute economic crises can explode into sectarian political conflicts' (Hudson 1999b, 36), the balancing of economic power among the various communities represents a salutary step towards the integration of society. Indeed, this situation may encourage the emergence of a class-based socially-centered movement that significantly cuts across communal sectarian groups, since both the economic elite and the underprivileged mass contain adherents from different communal groups.

Next, it should be noted that the provisions of the Ta'if Agreement, in terms of the need to implement economic reforms, stipulate that the balanced, cultural, social (read religious) and economic growth of the regions is a principal pillar of the pillars of unity of the state and of stability of the system. Therefore, the Accord recognises the threat to the system that uneven growth can generate, without offering prospective solutions. Indeed, it is useful to consider the argument that the Accord did not provide the framework for the introduction of much-needed reforms. According to this view, Abul-Husn holds that the accord resolved the political aspect of the problem, rather than its social origins, pointing out that the underlying origins of the conflict²⁶ have not been addressed directly (Abul-Husn 1998, 131). Similarly, Sirriyeh writes in 1997: the fact that Ta'if has been 'mute' concerning the economic problem 'indicates that the state is not in a position to deal with it, possibly due to its economic and political circumstances' (Sirriyeh 1997, 115).²⁷ Both arguments illustrate the above-mentioned governmental policy of procrastination and paralysis (the latter a result of consociationalism). For example, the creation of the Economic and Social Development Council, endorsed by the 1989 Ta'if Accord had to wait ten years. It was only established in 1999, despite its advisory, and thus non-binding, nature. In sum, governmental procrastination over the need to tackle the internal dimension of Lebanon's economic problems had a major detrimental effect on the economy itself, and needless to say, on societal stability.

In practice, the development and capital investment in the capital, Beirut, at the expense of the semi-peripheral and peripheral regions have been a major manifestation of the reconstruction drive of post-Ta'if governments. Thus, post-Ta'if Lebanon manifests significant regional economic disparities, which does not positively predispose the country to stability. Particularly worrying is the lack of government spending in the southern suburbs of Beirut and in the South of the country

²⁶ Mainly socio-economic disparity, sectarianism and political representation among others

²⁷ Guilain Denoeux & Robert Springborg echo similar views. 'Hariri's Lebanon: Singapore of the Middle East or Sanaa of the Levant?'. *Middle East Policy* 1998, (October), Vol.6, No.2, p.159.

(which are generally speaking Shi'i populated) as well as the government's manifest neglect of the previously Israeli-occupied Southern areas, which exhibit significant underdevelopment, socio-economic marginalisation and incredibly high unemployment rates. This is particularly troubling, as the recession in Lebanon has largely contributed to the erosion of the middle class,²⁸ considered by many the basis of political stability. Indeed, A 2002 UNDP estimate finds that 'a third of the population lives in relative poverty' (UNDP 2002, 23). Added to rising inequality, high levels of unemployment in Lebanon have also contributed to migration.

A recent study argues that education in Lebanon 'has proved to be a mixed blessing, because too many graduates do not find jobs in the local markets and are forced to leave the country or become underemployed. Lebanon...is experiencing a massive brain drain' (Tabbara 2002). This is also worrying as the real wealth of Lebanon lies in its people.²⁹ For instance, the 2003 Global Human Development Report ranks Lebanon's Human Development Index [hereafter HDI] at 83 out of 175 countries (DSO, 11 July 2003).³⁰ Hence, migration and brain drain as a result of unemployment suggest that social and economic stability could be better enhanced by the government, especially as Christian migration is significantly more pronounced than Muslim migration and also because the Christian population is shrinking in numbers, compared to the Muslim one. Indeed, Christian fears have been voiced out with regard to the marginalisation of the Christian communities. Irrespective of whether these concerns are legitimate or not, they affect social stability and are seen as undesirable.

Hence, post-war Lebanon exhibits more or less the same socio-economic ills of pre-war Lebanon. Due to the weakness of the state, of state institutions, and the lack of an effective national economic recovery programme, among other factors, clientelism is still a procedural manifestation of the post-war societal order. Faour reveals that the patronage system 'is common in politics, business, extended family, parochial associations, and even in voluntary associations that assume a modern appearance' (Faour 1998, 56). Hence, the post-war Lebanese political system, in its retaining of confessionalism as a system of representation, continues to exhibit a complex network of patron-client relationships. For instance, Hudson argues that the preoccupation of the troika leaders 'with clientelistic concerns over public policy appears to account for the government's lacklustre and the uneven governmental performance' (Hudson 1997, 119-20). Indeed, the procedural aspects of the functioning of the Lebanese political system suggest that it is difficult for Lebanese elites, including

²⁸ For more details on the erosion of the Lebanese middle class, considerable poverty levels and the growing gap between the rich and the poor, partly due to the increase of taxes on the poor and their decrease on the rich, see Michael Hudson, 1999b, 'Lebanon after Ta'if: another reform opportunity lost?'. *Arab Studies Quarterly* (Winter), Vol.21, No.1, p.32 and 36.

²⁹ See Section C.2. in this chapter

parliamentarians to refrain from lobbying for credits and developing projects for their own regions, districts and communities, (to satisfy their clients from which they derive their power), despite a shortage of resources and government pleas for austerity measures.

For his part, Denoeux advances the notion of the constraining effects of clientelism by drawing a distinction between the stabilising and destabilising effects of clientelism. He observes that 'while informal networks usually provided the "glue" that held together mosaic-like cities in which institutions were relatively weak, they also could operate, at times, as channels for political dissent' (Denoeux 1993, 9-10). Again, 'while informal networks often integrate individuals and groups into urban society, they also can provide paths through which alienated counterelites and marginalised segments of the lower classes can disrupt social peace'. Denoeux, drawing on Lebanon and Middle Eastern countries in general, warns that 'the conditions under which networks can change their role from system-supportive to system-challenging are very important' (Denoeux 1993, 9-10). In sum, such observations best describe the extent to which clientelism is entrenched in the Lebanese political system and thus, point to its constraining impact. As argued previously, the constraining effects of clientelism threaten the stability of the system from many points of view, and interfere with merit and competence criteria in the appointment of public officials. In short, the present discussion of the socio-economic constraints operating in post-war Lebanese society argues that there is little reason to believe that the new consociational structure of rule is more adequately equipped to deal with the worsening economic situation.

Furthermore, it should be said that the confessional system in Lebanon does not adhere to the consociational principle of proportionality solely within the realm of the public sector, i.e., in the administration and the government. On the contrary, the implementation of this principle extends also to the private sector. Despite the fact that the consociational model, as devised by Lijphart, does not prescribe the compartmentalisation of the private sector along proportionality lines, it can, however, be said that this is a likely consequence in such a divided context. The private sector becomes prone to such compartmentalisation. The fragmentation at the level of the public sector extends to the private sector as it becomes increasingly difficult to insulate the latter from considerations of proportionality. While this is partly due to the divided context within which the private sector operates, it is also a result of the strong linkages that exist among the economy and political structure of Lebanese society.³¹ For example, in his study of Lebanese business associations,³² Baroudi writes: 'it is often argued that associations representing economic interests

³⁰ Unsurprisingly, the country's economic ranking stands at 110 out of 175 countries.

³¹ This issue will constitute the main discussion of section E.4. in this chapter

³² Sami Baroudi, 'Sectarianism and Business Associations in Postwar Lebanon'. *Arab Studies Quarterly*, 2000b, (Fall), Vol.22, No.4, pp. 81-107.

are essentially secular entities not bounded or permeated by sectarian considerations' (Baroudi 2000b, 1). However, towards the end of the article, he notes that:

A close look at Lebanon's business associations reveals the contrary (Baroudi 2000b, 1). Sectarian balances are present in practically all economic and professional associations in Lebanon. Lebanese businessmen, as businessmen elsewhere, are primarily interested in profit. But like the rest of the population, Lebanese businessmen have their primordial loyalties to their sect...and do keep a close watch on how well, or how poorly, (in their opinion) their sect is represented in major decision-making bodies... One should expect sectarian balances to be observed in all of the leading business associations, as well as in the less important ones... (Baroudi 2000b).

Indeed, the insulation of business associations from political and sectarian decision-making appears difficult under the consociational framework of rule. The prevalence of this mode of governance is limited not only to business associations, but also extends to labour syndicates. In this respect, Hamdan cites the 'increasing submission of a substantial number of [labour] syndicates to a political agenda imposed by sectarian elites connected to powerful private groups' (Hamdan 2000, 75).³³ Hamdan's comment should be viewed within the context of Lebanon's economy. Despite the resilience and solidity of the Lebanese private sector, it should be observed that the Lebanese economy is heavily reliant on the service sector for its source of revenues. Successive post-war governments have long neglected the agriculture sector, while reforms to modernise it have not been undertaken, despite it being 'the source of income for 30-40 percent of the population' (DSO, 21 January 2003). The modernisation of this sector, if undertaken by the government may decrease the economy's dependence on the tertiary sector, and in consequence, its dependence on sectarian considerations. The industrial sector also suffers from similar deficiencies³⁴ and obstacles to reform. In sum, the hegemonic control traditional political leaders (allied to powerful financial elites) exercise on the state apparatus, results in their unwillingness to develop socially-centered sectors.³⁵ Rather, elites tend to concentrate on the immediate benefits of the trade and financial sectors, despite the latter's volatile nature due to the quick and free mobility of capital, thereby accentuating Lebanon's dependence on and submission to the world economy. In sum, when both private and the public sectors are subject to sectarian considerations when it comes to representation, allocation of offices and funds, it becomes increasingly difficult to build a strong state able to deal with class cleavages.

The strong linkages that exist between the political and the economic elite play an important role in preventing reform of the public administration. The close alliances and mutual benefits that unite

³³ Translated from French.

³⁴ Hamdan makes the point that 'the development of the sectors of material production- agriculture and industry- has to be the principal objective of reconstruction, not only to absorb chronic unemployment and limit Lebanon's elementary and economic dependency, but also to guarantee its political independence' (Hamdan 1991, 99). Similarly, he notes that the 'influx of international capital that was invested in Lebanon was not invested in the real economic sector, a sector which suffers from a lack of productive investments' (Hamdan 2000, 73). Translated from French.

traditional politicians to powerful financial groups suggest that the political elite would be unwilling to attempt serious reform programme of Lebanese public administration. Hamdan notes that the government's objectives and priorities regulating the allocation of investments were revised, amended and even reversed three or four times in the span of five years, mainly for the sake of adjusting inter and intra-sectarian balances and for meeting the requisites of clientelist relations, which the various blocs in power are keen to maintain and uphold (Hamdan 2000, 70).³⁶ This situation is very much unfortunate as reforms along the lines of Chihabism could have a salutary effect on social stability, as they would address the problem of poverty and deprivation and build a more economically equitable society. As Hanf reminds us, the Lebanese state functioned best during the Shihabist era, when the state installed its power by promoting a greater measure of economic and social justice (Hanf 1990, 69).³⁷ Hence, one way to create prospects for democratic stability seems to lie in economic recovery and prosperity. For instance, Walbiner, a research fellow at the German Institute for Oriental Studies in Beirut recently says that the main problem that has to be solved is the economic situation: 'if this is solved, there will be more tolerance and there will be better living together' (Walbiner 2000).

Finally and more importantly, no consensus, plan or national strategy has been devised to provide a role to Lebanon in the world order so that it can carve its niche and compete successfully in the global economy. Worse, there is no vision yet of what the role of Lebanon should be in the global economy. There has yet to be government interest and strategy in this end. As it stands, Lebanon's elite is attempting again to limit Lebanon to playing its pre-war merchant Republic role,³⁸ despite the fact that it was shown that this is rather difficult and despite the fact that this course has contributed to a great extent to the breakdown of the system and has manifested its failure in a very revealing way, through the long civil war and the dependence and hence vulnerability of Lebanon's economy on the world economy. In this respect, Marr writes that 'states that are not able to accomplish these tasks [economic restructuring, privatisation, export-oriented growth strategies] and compete in the new international economic market place, may face economic marginalization-or worse. Successful states are likely to be more stable; unsuccessful ones, part of a *more disorderly world*' (Marr 1998, 75).³⁹

³⁵ This issue will be discussed in section D.3. in this chapter

³⁶ Translated from French.

³⁷ Translated from French.

³⁸ For scholars who argue similarly, see Diab (1999) Conclusion and Nemer H. Ramadan, Le Liban à l'ère des "ajustements structurels": Mauvaise gouvernance et retour aux déséquilibres d'avant-guerre. Montréal: Université du Québec [Département de science politique- Groupe de Recherche sur l'intégration continentale], 2000.

³⁹ Emphasis added. For more forceful critiques of globalisation, the renowned Edward Said paints a very dramatic scenario for the Middle East. See Edward Said, 'Scoundrel times indeed'. Al-Ahram weekly online, 23-29 December 1999, Issue No.461. Cairo: Al-Ahram. <http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/1999/461/op2.htm>

F. Recapitulation: post-war consociationalism and democratic stability

The present chapter began with the notion that Lebanon's stability is significantly linked to the stability of the region in both ways. In other words, regional turbulence is bound to generate significant local political and social instability and by the same token, local events on the Lebanese scene, (such as a possible economic breakdown and the degree of social breakdown it will entail) have outside repercussions. At the same time, local developments on the Lebanese domestic scene depend significantly upon regional conditions, and hence, internal solutions to internal problems involve external regional considerations that have to do with the stability of the region as a whole. Two examples that illustrate the regional dimension that Lebanon's problems take are related to the ongoing manifestations of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. On the one hand, as Lebanon is home to a significant number of Palestinian refugees, the argument that 'an effective resolution of this issue would greatly contribute to Lebanon's stability' (Sirriyeh 1997, 117) is important if this means the right of refugee return is implemented. Likewise, an eventual externally imposed naturalisation of the Palestinian refugees in Lebanon is bound to generate a potentially explosive situation. On the other hand, Israel's many attempts to exploit the social makeup of Lebanon, i.e., the multi-sectarian Lebanese entities and its attempts to play on Lebanon's western and eastern tendencies illustrate the high permeability of Lebanese borders to outside manipulation and detrimental intervention.

Against this background, consociationalism, which prevents the ability of elites and masses to agree on what national interest means, emerges as a significant source of instability should regional conditions worsen or should the strategic interests of the major players in the region shift. Indeed, the consociational structure of rule makes it difficult for Lebanon not to be involved in the conflicts raging outside its borders. Kabbara argues that under the consociational framework, 'a problem of confidence will always manifest itself forcing the different antagonistic camps to turn to outside powers to protect themselves from the others. Any of the regional or super-powers could easily shake the balance of force' (Kabbara 1991, 350).

Against this background, Syria's deep understanding of the detrimental complexities of consociational rule and its awareness of the fragility of the consociational "peace" have been crucial in keeping Lebanon stable. Syria's understanding that 'consociationalism has remained the lesser evil or the best option under the current circumstances' (Smootha and Hanf 1992, 41) has been crucial in enabling it to play a mediation and stabilising role. Such understanding and awareness of the "Lebanese problem" are illustrated in the provisions of the Ta'if Agreement relating to Syrian-Lebanese relations, and were strengthened later in a series of agreements between both countries.

Ta'if states that there exists between Lebanon and Syria “distinguished relationships”. Specifically, the Accord stipulates that Lebanon shall under no circumstances be made a source of threat to the security of Syria, nor Syria to the security of Lebanon. Therefore, Lebanon shall not permit itself to become a passageway or a dwelling to any force, state or organisation, which aims to undermine its security or the security of Syria. And Syria, which is keen on preserving the security, independence and unity of Lebanon and concurrence among its people, shall not permit any act that may threaten Lebanon's security, sovereignty and independence. Implicitly, the Accord states that everything will be done by Syria to keep the Lebanese front stable.

Additionally, during the last decade, Lebanon and Syria signed multiple accords and bilateral treaties for co- operation, mainly political and military, most importantly the 1985 Damascus Accord and the 1991 Treaty of Brotherhood, Co-operation, and Friendship. The latter established the Supreme Syrian-Lebanese Council that formalises Syrian control of Lebanese foreign and security policies. Thus, while Syria's role is mainly based on the premise of protecting its borders from Israeli penetration, Syrian influence in Lebanon has taken a hegemonial character (despite it being that of a broker mediating among parties), facilitated as a result of elite conflicts over the governance of the country. Thus, although Lebanon finds itself in a position partly of its own making, Syria's role in assisting and sustaining Lebanese consociational politics suggests that democratic stability is hard to achieve. Hence, the argument of this thesis that consociationalism, as a conflict-regulation mechanism, effectively and procedurally borrows additional conflict-regulation mechanisms (from the conflict-regulation literature) to sustain its operability in the Lebanese case is illustrated by the Lebanese post-Ta'if conduct of consociational politics.

Consociationalism prevents political maturity of the political system. The political system that consociationalism established in the Lebanese case can be reduced to the elites, which are the real and effective institutions of governance. The argument that ‘the President of the Republic, Prime Minister, members of the Cabinet, President of the Chamber, and the Deputies know very well that sound communication among them is essential for their successful performance in their jobs and for the enactment of necessary legislation’ (Jabbra & Jabbra 2001, 75) sums up the necessary criteria for the successful operation of consociational politics. And yet, the conduct of politics suggests that the system is not politically mature as the inability or unwillingness of these elites to compromise suggests.

Against this background, it is essential to re-question the internal logic, consistency and operability of consociational theory. Indeed, the consociational model of democracy is a conflict-regulation mechanism. It was born from the need to prevent communal conflicts in divided (and deeply

divided) societies, that is, heterogeneous and unstable societies, by providing a system capable of generating and maintaining democratic stability. Throughout this thesis, it was shown that the model goes through cyclical crises involving violence and a collapse of the social order, if no attempt is made by the outside to ensure that this model functions as consociational theory purports. While it seems difficult for the model to generate democratic stability, its ability to prevent the outbreak of communal conflict, if the above conditions are met (arbitration), remains more adequate.

As to the internal dangers that threaten prospects for a pluralist Lebanese democracy, Moubarak cites prejudices/preconceptions which lead to the failure of dialogue; flawed over-generalisations when it comes to inter-communal perceptions; extreme politicisation of issues; resignation and submission of the wider public that they cannot change the system; the inability to transcend the urge to seek communal rights above national interest and citizen rights; elites' refusal to compromise in order for their followers to perceive them as defenders of the community's rights; mutual elite accusations; and the inability of the communal groups to forgive and turn a page on the war as well as the politicisation of ethnic/communal identity (Moubarak 2002).⁴⁰ Hence, there is little reason to believe that adjustments made in the consociational model in Lebanon will be much better in preventing conflict. Despite the modified consociationalism that resulted from Taif, the country still remains deeply divided. The elites are still what they were in essence.

Hence, the present discussion has raised doubts concerning the ability of the new model to generate political and social stability within democratic practices. While the scope and power of the grand coalition has contributed to the stability of the system, an elaboration of the concept of the grand coalition to enlarge its scope of representation and power seem more adequate in enhancing prospects for stability. However, this should not obscure the fact that the Ta'if Agreement appears to be a short-term process, rather than a definitive settlement. Indeed, the accord illustrates the temporarily dominant position of some leaders of some of the communal groups, bound together by alliances based on interests, rather than on a commitment to preserve the stability of the country. In his critique of Lijphart's and Messarra's work on consociationalism, Kabbara writes that 'the authors of the theory base their argument on certain political moments where two or more political identities are the dominant feature of the society in question. In order to avoid violent conflict, the theory tries to keep a balance between the different communal or subcultural identities under the umbrella of a moderate national affiliation and to turn such a balance into a permanent state of affairs' (Kabbara 1991, 353). While Kabbara's criticism cannot be truer, it may be argued, that

⁴⁰ Translated from Arabic.

since 'the accord rejects the idea that parliamentary seats need to be reallocated periodically to adjust for disparate rates of population growth among the major confessional groups' (Norton & Schwedler 1994, 47-8) by adopting an equal representation system of parity, the chances of survival within the post-war system have significantly increased. However, consociationalism being an elite-centered or actor-centered model, hence substituting democratic institutions of governance, Roberson's argument is particularly insightful:

As regards Lebanon itself, one of the lessons in history is that if a country's political elite loses their coherence and fragments, the country can become a prey of its neighbours and beyond. Without this coherence of the Lebanese political elites, Lebanon's ability and capacity to chart its course vis à vis its neighbours is significantly weakened (Roberson 1998a, 4).

Chapter 6 Conclusion

Interest in this research began with the observation that Lebanon's consociational politics did not bring about democratic stability to the plural society Lebanon is, as Lijphart's consociational theory states. Hence, this raises some questions that this thesis has sought to address. First, though the pre-war institutionalised Lebanese experiment with consociationalism lasted for a little longer than thirty years, it was subject to various breakdowns of internal stability, involving violence, during this period, until it completely collapsed in 1975, with the outbreak of the Lebanese civil war. Second, more than a decade after the end of the Lebanese civil war (1975-1990), and despite the "improved" consociational system, it is obvious that Lebanese consociational politics are highly unstable¹ and that Lebanon survives because Syria is making a continuous contribution to ensuring that to some extent a status quo exists which ensures a degree of stability, as it has a stake in the stability of Lebanon for a number of reasons discussed in previous chapters.² The relative power of the state and the involvement of Syria constitute the degree of stability that exists in Lebanon today. Currently, Syria still plays an influential role in the maintenance of stability and order in Lebanon. In other words, the new post-war "improved" consociational system does not seem to have fulfilled its objective of creating endogenous democratic stability, i.e., socio-political and economic stability within democratic practices. As Khairallah points out, 'whatever semblance of normalcy, stability or recovery Lebanon enjoys at present is a direct consequence of Syria's determination. It cannot be attributed to the spirit of reconciliation among Lebanese that the Ta'if Accord is presumed to have produced' (Khairallah 1994, 262). Hence, this observation brings to mind the relevance of the definition of stability (provided in Chapter 3) that this thesis adopts

¹ Beyond any doubt, political instability in Lebanon is, to a considerable extent, linked to the new power configurations that have emerged as a result of the civil war. For instance, the Maronites ended up with less power in the political configuration of post-war Lebanon. This was due largely to the fact that they collaborated with the Israeli invasion and occupation. Israel was forced to withdraw and the Maronites in effect lost the war. In the process, Maronite political power was reduced, thus contributing to political instability in Lebanon as the Maronites have been on the top of the political heap in Lebanon until 1975. The Maronites have a strong historical connection with Lebanon. To some considerable extent, they have been prominent in the definition of Lebanon. They were quite ambitious to play a prime role in the politics of Lebanon. Their ambitions led them to be involved in the conflicts that occurred among the confessional groups. Today, one can reasonably infer that they would want to regain the position they held before the war and the political changes that followed, however most certainly not by force. The question of force and Maronite failure to succeed in the civil war suggests that force might be a bankrupt policy. However, significant resentment among the Maronites, elites and masses alike contributes to instability. For more on the Maronites' close identification with Lebanon, Maronite identity, the development of Maronitism and its isolationist separatist exclusionary stance, see Hagopian, Elaine C. (1989). *Maronite hegemony to Maronite militancy: the creation and disintegration of Lebanon. Third World Quarterly* (October), Vol.11, No.4, pp.101-17, Abingdon: Carfax and Schulze, Kirsten (1996). 'Israeli and Maronite Nationalisms: Is a Minority Alliance Natural?'. In Kirsten E. Schulze, Martin Stokes and Colm Campbell, eds. *Nationalism, Minorities and Diasporas: Identities and Rights in the Middle East*, pp. 158-170. London: I.B. Tauris. For the territorial identification of the Maronites with their "national home", see Khalifah, Bassem. (1997), *The rise and fall of Christian Lebanon*. Toronto: York Press Limited, pp.2-4.

² One important reason is Israel's attempts to subvert the social order in Lebanon and its existence today as a dominant power in its relations with Lebanon, despite the Israeli withdrawal in the summer of 2000. Another reason involves the nature of the instability in the region and its impact on Lebanese political developments and domestic peace.

when it comes to the Lebanese context and which was taken to mean the ability of local elites alone to maintain political, social and economic stability in the plural society without resorting to outside intervention.³

Indeed, the functioning of the consociational system in Lebanon suggests that in practice, there is a societal context in which a tenuous understanding of accommodation exists among different groups of unequal size and power within a particular balance of power among these groups and with the permanent intervention and backing of a third party, Syria. This fragile environment is revealed through the extraordinary weaknesses⁴ that the successive post-war Lebanese governments exhibit, quite possibly pointing out that the instability of the Lebanese state lies in the consociational political structure of the country, which institutionalises and fosters sectarianism and its attendant consequences. Such a structure of rule was discussed at length throughout this thesis. At the same time however, it seems apparent that if one were to try to change the balance of forces that already exists (in order to annihilate the divisive effects incurred by consociationalism, prevent the politicisation and manipulation of ethnicity and minimise the risks of conflict outbreak), this would only entrench the insecurity within society and increase instability within the country.⁵ In the light of Lebanon being a prime example of consociational theory in action, and in view of the dilemma of the Lebanese situation,⁶ selecting Lebanon as a case study appears pertinent as it provides the opportunity for this thesis to undertake a critical investigative analysis of consociational theory and the ways it operates in practice. This has been achieved by juxtaposing the theory of consociational democracy with the case study, Lebanon, in an attempt to determine whether the consociational model of rule functions as the theory suggests, in that it generates democratic stability in plural societies.

In other words, this thesis investigates what Halpern calls the 'uncritical acceptance of the model's logical warrant' (Halpern 1984, 4) based on the Lebanese context. Thus, the central research question that this thesis addresses is the supposedly causative relationship between consociationalism and democratic stability. The ability of the consociational model to prevent the outbreak of communal conflict and generate and maintain democratic stability was tested in various

³ For a reminder of the definition, see Chapter 3, section A.1.

⁴ Briefly, the Lebanese state is weak in that the government has difficulty in arriving at domestic policies, has difficulty in organising itself to implement policies and has difficulty in dealing effectively in its international relations.

⁵ When the opportunity for system change presented itself during peace-making efforts in the late 1980s, Syria was willing to postpone a fundamental change in the form of political organisation in Lebanon and went along with a modified consociational form that basically failed in the past. This was so in the light of the past experiences and history of Lebanon, Israel's failed attempt to establish a government of its own making in Beirut, the turbulent regional situation and the urgent need to impose peace and keep the Lebanese-Israeli front stable as an unstable one meant a direct threat to Syria's survival interests.

⁶ A situation that also existed in pre-war Lebanon in a slightly modified form.

chapters in this thesis through the Lebanese lens. Thus, with this objective in mind, this research sought to:

- * Re-examine the claim that the consociational system of rule generates democratic stability and is able to maintain it in Lebanon; and
- * Based on the investigation of the above claim, re-examine the claim that the consociational model of democracy is a successful counteractive mechanism against the permanent political, socio-cultural and economic fragmentation of Lebanon's plural society and the outbreak of another communal conflict.

Though the Lebanese political system has been the subject of numerous research that this thesis draws on, few studies have focused on the analysis of the politics of consociationalism in Lebanon in great detail.⁷ Thus, while this thesis does not claim in any measure to have settled the unresolved debates of Lebanese politics and Lebanon's conundrum, it does offer insights into how consociationalism in Lebanon is structured and how it works in practice, based on pre-war and post-war procedural social, political and economic manifestations of Lebanon's system and society. The objective of this agenda is in line with the main orientation of this thesis, namely the re-examination of the significance of Lijphart's claim relating to the causative (i.e., positive) relationship between the consociational model and the stability of the system. This re-examination has raised some questions and answers that can briefly summarised as follows:

This thesis acknowledges the importance of consociational theory in the light of the many countries of the world that adopt the model despite previous failed experiments (such as Lebanon). In consequence, the re-examination of the failure of the model to bring democratic stability has necessitated this research introducing an original elaboration of the model (throughout the thesis) shown to be bound to enhance prospects for stability and hence, democratic stability. This might thus provide a way in which consociationalism can operate without the need for a heavy dose of internal mediation and external arbitration to ensure a relative degree of stability.

This chapter has so far highlighted the relevance of selecting Lebanon as a case study for the purposes of this thesis. It has restated the basic research question, as well as the secondary questions that this study has addressed. It has pointed to the existing gap in the literature and how it was filled, and has briefly presented the questions that were raised, the answers to them and indicated why and in what ways this study would be relevant. This chapter will now summarise the main findings and conclusions of the study. It seeks to bring the threads of analysis together, highlighting the significance of the arguments that arose from this thesis and the implications and contribution of

this thesis to current research trends. Subsequently, this chapter will suggest ideas for further research on Lebanon's conundrum. Lastly, it will move from the particular to the general, by suggesting in what ways the results of this study offer insights into the governance of plural societies in countries other than Lebanon.

Since the focus in this thesis is on consociational theory as applied to Lebanon, the purpose has been to critically evaluate the theory of consociationalism and the utility of this theory in the Lebanese context. In other words, the aim has been to assess the intellectual validity of the theory and its application to Lebanon in order to end up with some judgement that is implied by the title of this dissertation. Thus, these objectives called for an examination into the internal logic of this theory, the assumptions and implications contained in the theory and its consistency, before its relations to democratic theory and its utility in the Lebanese context are tested in later chapters. These necessary tasks were undertaken in Chapter 2.

The discussion in Chapter 2 has reviewed and further developed the criticisms that were offered against the theory, as well as the problems faced by researchers working with the theory. A number of conclusions arose and may be summarised as follows. Chapter 2 identified the need to develop definitions that were more appropriate to the context within which this thesis operates (a task undertaken in Chapter 3). The examinations undertaken suggest that elites are unable at times to prevent the outbreak of communal conflict and more importantly, for the purposes of the central question of this thesis, to create and maintain democratic stability. Indeed, the brief discussion of a number of critical case studies pointed to the inability and unwillingness of the elite, in some cases, to create and maintain a stable democratic system; in other cases, it pointed to the inability of the elite to prevent the outbreak of ethnic conflict, suggesting that additional mechanisms are needed to assist consociational mechanisms. The detailed discussion of the logic and internal assumptions of consociational theory suggests that the theory appears to be inherently flawed. This reveals the significant problems researchers face when working with the model, and leads to confusion surrounding the theory itself. Finally, the disparities between the model itself and the cases that have been described as consociational democracies, namely the Netherlands and Switzerland, the Malaysian Federation and Nigeria, limit and call into question the utility of the theory for plural societies. As a result, Chapter 2 identified the need to introduce an elaboration of the model (undertaken in Chapter 3), and examine its significance, advantages and shortcomings as based on the Lebanese context (tasks undertaken in Chapters 4 and 5).

⁷ For instance, Jamali concludes in her recent doctoral thesis: 'Research about Lebanese democracy however is still in its infancy. There has been no comprehensive attempt to explore the peculiarities of the Lebanese democratic order and the extent to which it conforms or deviates from Arend Lijphart's consociational model' (Jamali 2001, 295).

Indeed, the study of democracy in Lebanon was an attempt to bring greater clarity to the concept, using Lebanon as a case study. Like so many concepts in international relations, international studies and politics, there are considerable ambiguities in the notion of democracy, which is in itself a contested concept. However, though the idea of democracy is complex, it is an important idea in terms of the concerns of civil society. Where previously democracy was traditionally considered in institutional and procedural terms, today the emphasis appears to be on the notion of governance as a political process, an approach that seems very appropriate in the study of Lebanese politics. Therefore, after paving the way for the major discussions addressed in this thesis in Chapter One (Introduction) and after examining the internal logic of consociational theory (Chapter 2), Chapter 3 has attempted to offer a critique of democratic theory that might shed greater light on the theory. It involved a critical discussion of the theory, drawing on a detailed exploration of the various aspects of the consociational model.

Having first defined the major concepts and terms that this thesis refers to and after describing the complexities of the societal stage on which this thesis unfold, Chapter 3 proceeded to explain in detail the model of consociational democracy (its institutions and mechanisms of rule) and to examine its relations to democratic theory. Particular attention was devoted to the discrepancies between the structural aspects and the procedural processes of democracy, and to the impact of the latter on the form of democracy that a society manifests or practises. Indeed, the examination of the procedural processes of democracy pointed to the elite nature of democratic rule (i.e., the strong element of elite rule in democracies). This discussion is pertinent for the purposes of this thesis because of the determinant emphasis that consociational theory places on the cooperative role of the elite as a condition for system stability (and democratic stability) within plural societies and because the central question of this thesis is a re-investigation of the so-called positive relationship between consociationalism (in procedural terms, elite behaviour) and system stability.

The discussion revealed that the consociational institutions of rule (crucially elite behaviour through the grand coalition) do not always provide an effective mechanism or instrument for the creating and maintaining order and stability within a plural society. Thus, their ability to produce democratic stability in such societies was called into question. Indeed, an examination of the processes of consociational theory has suggested that the elite does not always play an accommodative role. The procedural aspects questioned the effectiveness of the institutional instruments of consociationalism in preventing the outbreak of conflict and maintaining order in divided societies. As such, the consociational model sometimes fails to deliver on the promise of democratic stability in such societies. Thus, the significance of the claim pertaining to the causative relationship between consociationalism and democratic stability was seriously challenged. Indeed, the examination of the

limitations of the consociational model, in many respects considered essential to the definition of democratic stability, lends support to this argument and as a result, questions the so-called particular suitability and applicability of the model to plural societies.

First, the procedural examination of the grand coalition, as devised by Lijphart, pointed to the important group exclusion it engenders and to the extremely elitist and hegemonic character it takes, as opposed to the mainstream observations of its elitist character. In other words, consociationalism seems unable to form a “grand coalition”, and hence the utility of the theory is questioned. This results in considerable societal/communal unrest and as such, Chapter 3 suggested an improvement in the scope of the grand coalition which would enhance prospects for stability and hence, the utility of the model and the consistency of the theory. Equally, because of the recourse by elites to the manipulation and politicisation of politically salient issues, this prevents the emergence of class-based consciousness. Second, procedurally, elite rule sometimes appears to protect the rights of the different communal groups that make up the divided society, rather than the nation (which is already very detrimental). At other times, however, it even fails to protect communal interests (as a result of scarce resources) and it is not either able to ensure a fair and adequate distribution of resources, privileges, power and status among the communal groups, hence undermining the stability of the system, and calling into question the relevance of the theory which appears pointless if it fails on the minimum basic requirement, the protection and representation of the rights of communal groups. In such cases, the elites appear to protect only their interests and those of their close associates and family members. Indeed, there is a tension between the functions that the different elites have to perform. On the one hand, they have to maintain the stability of the system and preserve national interest. On the other hand, they have to satisfy their respective constituencies, in the sense that they have to represent and protect the interests of the majority of their respective communities, preserve their communities’ distinctiveness, identity and belief systems, their status as a group within society and the particular order that exists within this community. As such, the tensions involved within this bargaining process, in which the elites engage suggest that it is very difficult for a national consensus, which is a desirable outcome, to emerge on domestic as well as regional issues. There seems to be no sense of a national element in the nature of society [and a national component of politics]. Chapter 3 highlighted a frequent manifestation of the failure of the theory in that respect, namely immobilism in executive decision-making (at the governmental level) and the cyclical crises that it often goes through (sometimes involving violence). Thus, the maintenance of stability and order within plural society under consociational rule was called into question. This suggests that democratic stability is sometimes difficult to achieve in that complex context.

Against this background, the suggestion of broadening the scope of the grand coalition appears to be one way of avoiding group exclusion. It leads to kick-starting a system of mutual checks and balances within that executive body and hence, encourages the emergence of intra-alliances within it that might channel decision-making towards a more representative policy, rather than an extremely elitist one. At the very least, broadening the scope of the grand coalition preserves the communal groups' right to use the mutual veto, an essential feature of the consociational model. While this may involve deadlock, it is still seen in the present thesis as a better alternative to the narrow scope of the grand coalition, which leads to significant societal resentment and unrest and allows for procedural rule of the nation by majority segments only. These two manifestations are more dangerous for the stability of the system, this thesis argues, than deadlock and immobilism.

Third, the approach of consociationalism to the organisation of society lends considerable support to the argument that under the consociational structure of rule, permanent fragmentation of society is a likely outcome. Indeed, the examination of the various aspects of the consociational model, and crucially, the considerable degree of segmental autonomy it prescribes (according to which a minimal contact between the communal groups is desirable), reveals that consociational theory implicitly fosters distinctiveness, discrimination and separatism. This makes inter- and intra-communal tolerance/toleration as well as peaceful communal coexistence difficult, and indeed, tends to perpetuate divisions within societies. Additionally, the discussion pointed out that it is not very clear how minimal contact between the groups may be achieved, especially in small states. This challenges the internal logic of consociational theory. Moreover, the functioning of the consociational model as prescribed by consociational theory has been shown to encourage groups to continue to seek external linkages to preserve their different value systems and buttress their positions in the system, bringing outside intervention and hence instability. In this respect, the dissertation pointed out that Lijphart's assertion that 'perceived external threats are conducive to democracy' lacks logical clarity, as under the consociational structure of rule, this perception is most often a function of communal considerations and perceptions (such as the case of Israel's relations with Lebanon illustrates). Consociationalism institutionalises permanent societal fragmentation, coupled with extreme elitism, and anticipates that this combination will work flawlessly in creating and maintaining democratic stability. On the one hand, elites have to maintain the system and groups sufficiently united to prevent an outbreak of communal conflict. On the other hand, they are supposed to run the country from a confessionally based approach. As a result, consociational theory expects that elites will be skilful in applying the right measures of unity versus confessionalism. Procedurally, it appears that elites do play that role. However, this comes at the expense of stability and allows elites to control their followers who are lost and mobilised, while the elites run the country together for their own interests.

Similarly, the examinations of the consociational principle of proportionality in terms of political representation and the allocation of public funds has pointed to the considerably detrimental impact the operation of this principle has on the stability of the system. Particular attention was given to the detrimental processes involved in the implementation of this principle. The examination has shown that the procedural aspects of this principle contribute to the politicisation of ethnicity, in the sense that inter- and intra-group competition over scarce political and economic power translates into religious rivalries, thereby undermining the stability of the system.

Having examined consociational theory in detail, and discussed its relations to democratic theory, Chapter 4 proceeded to explore why and in what ways Lebanon might be considered to fit into this explanation of political organisation. Focusing on the pre-war Lebanese political system, the discussion juxtaposed the theory of consociational democracy with the case study of Lebanon. The examination and analysis of the form of democracy that has emerged in Lebanon called for this chapter to locate the discussion within the context of Lebanon's political and social environment and its history, since democracy takes many forms that depend upon the historical experience and the social structure of the society in question. Like all countries, Lebanon has its particular social and historical characteristics. Under the particular conditions that exist in the country, Lebanon has its own particular form of democratic governance based on consociationalism. Thus, Chapter 4 began by providing a brief historical narrative of the major pre-war system and highlighting the economic, political, historical and social factors that brought about consociational democracy in Lebanon, as embodied in the confessional political system. This system evolved to some considerable extent from the millet system under the Ottoman Empire, which may indeed have been the origin of confessional groupings and which can be considered as an embryonic form of Lebanese consociationalism and confessionalism as we see today. For instance, Jamali writes that 'the ethnic and confessional legacy of the Ottomans...in Lebanon relates to their promotion of the religious community as the main unit of social organization.... Lebanon indeed witnessed the first formal institutionalization of communalism and sectarianism under Ottoman rule...' (Jamali 2001, 284). The modernisation processes underway served to politically reshape community relations along religious lines. Throughout the 19th century, Lebanese politics fluctuated between periods of peace and periodic attempts to change the system so as to have a more equitable distribution of political benefits among the confessional groups, as it became obvious with time that the political balance in Lebanon was skewed in favour of the Maronites.⁸ While the 1926 Constitution consolidated these consociational sectarian arrangements, their translation into practice was a

⁸ As Johnson points out. For more details, see Michael Johnson, All honourable men: the social origins of war in Lebanon. Oxford: CLS in association with I.B. Tauris Publishers, 2001, pp.37-39.

different matter. In other words, there was a considerable contradiction between structural aspects and procedural practices.

The 1943 National Pact, a translation of the Constitution in practice, reflected the structure of political power and dominance in Lebanese society, namely Maronite and to some extent, Sunni hegemony. The agreement among a very limited number of confessional elites (two) brought some accommodation of the confessional groups to the dominant political position of the Maronites. As such, the processes and the institutions that were created did not make the 1926 Constitution an effective instrument for the creation and maintenance of order in society, as the outbreak of the civil war in 1975 suggests. Nor did they allow for peaceful change in the light of the changing realities of Lebanese political society and demography. The limited scope of representation of the 1943 Pact and its rigidity did not ensure the existence of processes and mechanisms that would order society and allow for peaceful change. Hence, such a situation lends support to the argument in favour of broadening the scope of the grand coalition. It best illustrates how the narrow scope of the grand coalition entailed group exclusion that eventually led to significant societal/communal resentment and latent unrest. In this sense, the pre-war Lebanese experiment with consociationalism illustrates the shortcomings of the model as devised by Lijphart, a shortcoming that manifested itself most starkly in the civil war. Indeed, this thesis subscribes to the view that the civil war was a manifestation of the failure of Lijphart's flawed consociational model, in the sense that failure is an inherent part of the theory itself.

Indeed, one of the purposes of the National Pact in Lebanon was an effort to create a set of institutions that would respond in some measure to the needs of the various groupings in Lebanon and recognise the balance of power that exists among them. It was an attempt to create a set of institutions of governance that would recognise the diversity of Lebanese society and try to manage differences, whilst accommodating various interests in order to maintain order and stability. The outcome was a formation of a small number of political elites that participate, in a fairly democratic way in the governance of the plural society, in close connection with the commercial-financial elites. However, the outbreak of the civil war was a manifestation of the failure of consociationalism to ensure order and stability in the country. As demonstrated in previous chapters, the failure of the model to create stability is an inherent flaw within consociational theory. Needless to say, the examination in Chapter 4 revealed the crucial role that elite consensual behaviour plays in the maintenance of the system and likewise, the extent to which non-consensual elite behaviour plays in its breakdown.

Indeed, Chapter 4 has discussed in detail the numerous deviations from the consociational model in terms of elite behaviour and the detrimental impact these deviations had on the stability of the system. This clearly challenges the internal logic of the theory, whose validity rests solely on the behavior of the elites. It should also be noted that a more complete, pertinent answer to the breakdown of order and stability may be found in a detailed examination of the interaction between the complex nature of Lebanon's society and its mechanisms of rule. Hence, Chapter 4 proceeds to undertake this task, i.e., examined the extent of responsiveness of elite behavior to the complexities of plural society in which consociationalism is supposed to operate.

The findings of Chapter 4 reveal that even if there is close cooperation among the elites (a consociational claim which was seriously challenged in previous chapters), it remains difficult to maintain order and stability within society. Indeed, starting with the assumption that elites try to reach accommodation with one another, this is because they realise that there is a comparative advantage they (and to a somewhat limited extent their respective communities) can derive from the political arrangement in place. Hence, a closer look at plural societies reveals that the factors that keep elites unified or brings about disunity among them are neither constant nor static. In other words, as the world is constantly changing, the factors that maintain cohesiveness between groups also change. The differences (religious, class, cultural...) that exist in divided societies overlap and cut across each other, raising doubts about the effectiveness of elite cooperation in maintaining stability. Against these (constantly changing) realities, the consociational model fails to provide effective mechanisms and institutions of governance by which groups may effectively adapt to these changes and maintain elite cooperation at the same time. Additionally, the consociational theory of democracy is challenged by many factors (such as regional turbulence and the rise of sectarian leaders unwilling to maintain traditions of political accommodation and hoping to rise to power), which make it problematic for consociationalism to sustain itself. This points to the very optimistic reliance of the theory on elites and to its optimistic reliance on the fact that outside threats will be perceived as threats by all communal groups. This is particularly troubling, not only for small states with no significant military power, but also because consociationalism promotes a divisive societal context which makes it difficult for people and to some extent, elites, to perceive what national interest is about.

Hence, the utility of the model as an effective governance mechanism to ensure Lebanon's stability has been called into question. Indeed, the outbreak of the civil war in 1975 lends considerable support to this argument. Hence, consociationalism's ability to create and maintain democratic stability was questioned. However, the re-introduction of a modified consociational system of rule in Lebanon after more than fifteen-years of violence called for Chapter 5 to address the following

question: Is the new "improved" system better equipped to create and maintain democratic stability in Lebanon's Second Republic? The findings of Chapter 5 reveal that there is little reason to believe that adjustments made in the consociational model in Lebanon will be more successful in preventing conflict, and hence creating democratic stability.

Despite the modified consociationalism resulting from the 1989 Ta'if Accord, the country is still deeply divided and the elites are still what they were in essence, unable at times to engage effectively in the bargaining process without endangering the stability of the system. After more than a decade of implementing a revised consociational formula in war-torn Lebanon that was designed to meet changing political and social realities and stop the fifteen-year civil war, the country is still not able to hold together. The Lebanese continue to live in a low-intensity civil war, thereby needing a Syrian presence in Lebanon to prevent a violent outbreak of communal conflict. The discussion in Chapter 5 has pointed to the lingering problems under the new consociational framework. It has focussed on government weaknesses through an examination of the executive decision-making branch (troika rule). Based on the inadequacies of the agreement, the discussion has cast doubt upon the ability of the consociational model to generate democratic stability in the country. The Ta'if Agreement appeared to be part of a process rather than a definitive settlement. Indeed, the examinations undertaken in this chapter has revealed that while the Ta'if Amendments introduced salutary reforms in terms of representation of the communal groups in the Lebanese political system, Lebanese politics are still highly unstable. This is despite the fact that the revised formula of the Lebanese political system relates more closely to the consociational model. While executive decision-making undertook significant mutation (as opposed to the pre-war Presidential Maronite-dominated system), hence somehow broadening the scope of the grand coalition, this is seen as enhancing prospects for stability, but without rendering the consociational system able to create and maintain a democratic system. It should be acknowledged that the Ta'if Accord recalibrated the amount of power among the major communal groups and the country is effectively run by the representatives of the three significant segments as the definition of grand coalition provided by Lijphart states. However, the grand coalition also refers to the Cabinet (i.e., the Council of Ministers), which includes representatives of almost all segments in Lebanese society. Hence, this broad-scope coalition is frequently able to influence and direct executive decision-making by the troika towards more representative and less elitist channels. As a result, a broad-scope coalition first solves the problem of group exclusion at the executive level. Second, while it does not translate into effective power and influence by the various Ministers (effective rule is still in the hands of the troika), it ensures that all voices are heard, leads to the emergence of temporary intra-alliances within the grand coalition (alliances that include minority groups together hence strengthening their collective position and bargaining power as a unified opposition group to the ruling troika) and

somehow puts a limit to the disagreements between the troika. Indeed, disagreements among the troika are frequent as all three leaders realise they can afford to disagree, as each represents a significant segment. As such, the Cabinet often acts as an internal mediator between them in cases of disagreement, hence solving crises. Additionally, it often is a reminder to the three leaders that if their respective power and influence allow them to disagree, the fragile stability of the country does not allow that. Moreover, this broad coalition has been able to represent the interests of the President, which is salutary in this context, not because he is the representative of the Maronite community (his popularity among the Maronites is rather weak), but because the Cabinet has often been seen as surrendering to the Prime Minister (who is not interested in reform) and because the President appears to be keen to kick-start the reform process.

At the same time however, directly related to this discussion are the processes through which the fifteen-year conflict was resolved and the processes through which relative stability is being maintained. Thus, Chapter 5 reviewed the mediation efforts undertaken during the Lebanese civil war. Particular attention was given to the important role that the regional and international contexts played in 1989, which resulted in the ending of the war. The discussion pointed to the influential role Syria played in ending the violent conflict since the peace when it came undoubtedly had a major input from Syria. Thus, the chapter explained the reasons why Syria preferred to postpone a fundamental change in the governance of Lebanon when the time for real change presented itself, and instead, went along with a modified consociational form that has, broadly speaking, failed in the past. In this respect, the argument in this thesis strongly deviates from the often-held claim (made by consociational theorists such as Lijphart and Messarra)⁹ that the consociational system was restored as it is the most adequate form for Lebanon's rule, and that the introduction of more consociational principles will undoubtedly strengthen Lebanese democracy.

Chapter 5 suggests that the re-introduction of consociational rule came about as a result of Syrian strategic considerations, as Syria was actively engaged in Lebanon's civil war since 1976, to protect its interests. This, combined with the fact that no one side in the civil war was able to predominate and impose/establish a new order based on its own perceptions as a victor. Indeed, the long war points to the inability of a dominant confessional group to emerge within Lebanon. As such, consociationalism was restored because it was the safest and least risky solution within the prevailing turbulent domestic context and regional circumstances. For instance, Syria has played an influential role in the political organisation of successive post-war governments, as it has the interest in, and ability to enforce the peace agreement (the Ta'if Accord). Undoubtedly, this points

⁹ 'Lijphart's line of thought is mainly defended in Lebanon by a prominent political scientist, Antoine Nasri Messarra' (Kabbara 1991, 346).

to the fact that the new post-war "improved" consociational system does not seem to have fulfilled its objective of creating political stability within democratic practices, a central question in this thesis. As such, the utility of the model in the Lebanese context is called into question. This is especially the case in the light of the permanent involvement of Syria in Lebanon in the form of arbitration to solve purely domestic issues. Additionally, additional mechanisms (excessive internal mediation and external and sometimes patronising arbitration) are needed to assist consociational mechanisms. The former, like consociationalism, are conflict-regulation mechanisms put forward by political scientists. In other words, consociationalism, as a conflict-regulation mechanism, is unable to solve alone the political, economic and socio-cultural problems of plural societies and that resorting to additional mechanisms in the conflict-regulation literature is much needed.

The central concern of this thesis is the stability of a plural society under the consociational structure of rule. Thus Chapter 5 also examined in detail the factors threatening stability in post-war Lebanon under the existing consociational arrangement, and which constitute obstacles to democratic stability. Despite the existence of a degree of stability, Lebanese politics is highly unstable and vulnerable to the slightest and most minor disruption. The way that successive Lebanese governments have functioned suggests they face difficulties in administering the country's affairs. Indeed, the Lebanese state is weak in that the government has difficulty in arriving at domestic policies, organising itself to implement policies and dealing effectively with its international relations. However, because the grand coalition was enlarged (though the troika rules effectively), prospects for stability have been enhanced. Indeed, the Cabinet has been able to act at times as a mediator/arbitrator, hence channeling decision-making in a more representative fashion.

At the same time there are significant post-war factors that still threaten the stability of the country. Lebanese political parties promote their own sectarian agenda, and may thus be said to contribute to the further segmentation of society, rather than to its modernisation, especially in the presence of socio-economic imbalances.¹⁰ As a result, a cursory look at post-war Lebanese society points to the emergence of heightened sectarian tensions, retribalisation and national disintegration, all of which constitute formidable obstacles towards democratic stability. For instance, consociational theory advocates the presence of overarching loyalties to counter balance its disintegrative effects. In practice, the occasional manifestations of an overarching loyalty to Lebanon were brought about by compromises imposed by crisis conditions. These manifestations lend support to the argument that

¹⁰ For more on the role political parties play in the Lebanese political system and its instability and the reflection of the intersection of class and ethnic divisions in party affiliation/membership, see Nazih Richani, Dilemmas of democracy and political parties in sectarian societies: the case of the Progressive Socialist Party of Lebanon 1949-1996. London: Mc Millan Press, 1998, pp.2-5.

sectarianism is antithetical to modern national development, namely that national reconciliation is still an objective and that there has yet to be a national ideology common to all peoples of Lebanon.

Particularly, socio-economic constraints and their translation into the current economic crisis constitute formidable obstacles to stability and the democratisation of society, and contribute to the politicisation of ethnicity/loyalty, the persistence of the patron-client network and hence, the dependency of large segments of the population on the patronage system. It may be said that the detrimental impact of this on the stability of the system constitutes the most serious threat that faces Lebanon's stability. Indeed, the patron-client network contributes to the politicisation of religious identity, as religion becomes the basis upon which individuals can claim their share of material and economic benefits. Additionally, because Lebanese society, like many modern societies, is divided in different ways, material benefits accrue in different ways depending on the constituents of that society. This results in the emergence of different groupings of unequal size and power, and brings to mind the pre-war situation and signalling that violent conflict may very well break out again. In the Lebanese context, a redistribution of state funds towards the poor, a large segment of which are Muslim, has not yet occurred. While this issue appears to be located within the social context, it actually requires a political decision, which is difficult to achieve in light of the complex bargaining process elites engage in.

As such, prospects for the gradual deconfessionalisation of politics and society in accordance with Horowitz's notion of integrative democracy (which may be a possible solution in the long-term for Lebanon's conundrum and a process by which the dynamics of nation building and nationhood are initiated)¹¹ appear dim. Indeed, it may be said that confessional elites are manipulating circumstances in ways that continue to damage the prospects for cooperation. Furthermore, the divisive impact of the consociational system of rule counteracts any manifestation of national power and this at the mass as well as the elite levels. Indeed, there are many low rank elites that are subject to manipulation by their superiors. Their official positions within the Lebanese political system are an inherent internal flaw that threatens stability. The implications of the lack of a shared vision suggest a permanent fragmentation of society. As a result, the only common denominator among the different groupings is the survival of the system by allocating political and economic resources. In light of the scarcity of material benefits, stability and hence democratic stability appear difficult to achieve. In sum, the discussions undertaken in Chapter 5 further question the causative relationship between consociationalism and system stability, as well as the utility of the theory for Lebanon since the real institutions of democratic rule in consociationalism are actor-centered. In

¹¹ Along the lines prescribed by Horowitz's notion of integrative democracy discussed in Chapter 3.

other words, the lack of cooperation among elites results from the flawed "human" institutional basis regulating their cooperation.

The different chapters of this thesis, particularly the juxtaposition of the consociational model with the Lebanese model, have pointed to the inability of the consociational model to function as the theory suggests. In other words, they suggest that Lebanese consociationalism cannot bring about the democratic stability that is desired. However, while the various discussions in this thesis have focused on the aspects of consociational governance as they relate to democracy, an effort was made in the present research to improve on the ability of the consociational model of democracy to work as the theory suggests.

Indeed, Chapter 3 argued for an elaboration of the model in terms of the inclusion of representatives from all communal groups in the grand coalition. Chapter 4 showed how and why the narrow-based grand coalition translated into a dominant hegemonic system of rule, which had a detrimental impact on the system that collapsed. Chapter 5, while acknowledging the salutary mutation (i.e., broadening) of the grand coalition on the stability of the system, pointed to its procedural shortcomings, namely extreme elitism. However, a salutary transition has been made from a hegemonic Maronite-dominated system to an elitist model (i.e., a grand coalition, representing all groups, however failing to effectively share executive decision-making among them all). Rather, it is a system of rule that effectively shares powers among its significant segments but that allows, a more representative system of rule, because the grand coalition is wide.

This is not to say, however, that the system is bound to sustain itself or to break down in the future. Whether or not Lebanon will witness another civil war is a moot question. It may be said, however, that the impetus for change, in order to achieve less political instability, may emerge as a result of the interplay between the modernisation processes underway and economic prosperity over time, leading to a progressive depoliticisation and deconfessionalisation, as advocated by Horowitz. At the same time however, the scarcity of material resources in Lebanon suggests that this is not readily possible. Beyond any doubt, a careful observation of the Lebanese domestic scene calls for the need for the coming to power of a more representative, harmonious elite to install political stability. Also required is a sound, balanced economic policy that can target the protection of national interests, as well as provide an insulation and immunisation of the local domestic scene from destabilising external turbulence. Hence, while these objectives appear to be easier to achieve, this study is by no means an invitation to optimism. Indeed, as Khatib points out, 'democracy is a product of nation-state integration. Thus the mere passage of time is not enough for setting up a stable democracy' (Khatib 1994, 316). In an environment where elites manipulate identities and

where religion and religious clerics continue to form part of the political game, mainly through the relative power the consociational model grants them (segmental autonomy), it is not clear how Lebanon is to move towards a deconfessionalisation of its political structure.

Additionally, elites have been shown as lacking in legitimacy, while legitimacy is a crucial element in consociationalism so that the latter ensures stability. Elites are not only representatives of a very narrow scope of the population, that is, their own respective group, but are also representatives of a somewhat limited fraction within this group, its upper strata. Hence, elites legitimacy remains very limited. As Lipset writes, 'to attain legitimacy, what new democracies need above all is efficacy, particularly in the economic arena, but also in the polity. If they can take the high road to economic development, they can keep their political houses in order. The opposite is true as well; Governments that defy the elementary laws of supply and demand will fail to develop and will not institutionalize genuinely democratic systems' (Lipset 1994, 1). Against this background, consociationalism, through the governmental paralysis it fosters, can be said to be the very antithesis of efficacy, and by extension legitimacy, and this makes stability difficult. In particular, there is a need for a wide, socially based social contract that can encompass all sections of the population sharing the same economic position. There is a need for more parties with a wide popular support base because there is a consensus that such political parties play a crucial role in the political game, contributing to the stability of the system, and are one of the backbones of a democratic system. Crucially, and for as long as the political system remains elitist in nature, Roberson's comments appear very pertinent:

Whatever the shortcomings of the Taif Agreement and subsequent treaties and other agreements to end the disorder in the country, and for however long the intersect system is utilized in the way that it has been to form the basis of the political system and government, the main confessional groups need to be engaged in the process of forming a consensus around which domestic, regional and international policies and strategies are being devised and pursued. Without this full engagement of the elite, the quality of Lebanese autonomy may be skewed, weakened or undermined (Roberson 1998a, 4).

At the same time, Shils' argument (based on Lebanon) that 'no complex modern society can live and grow solely from its consensus; it needs governmental institutions capable of making decisions which consensus alone cannot make. This fact does not render consensus any the less necessary' (Shils 1966, 4) is equally pertinent in assessing the prospects of stability in Lebanon.¹² For instance, while acknowledging the defective nature of Lebanon's democratic institutions, mainly in terms of the small change and relative flexibility they allow, Hudson writes that 'Lebanon's political institutions work rather well when there is little to be done, but as the work load increases the defects that once were tolerable become dangerous liabilities' (Hudson 1985b, 329). In the light of

¹² For authors who argue similarly, see (Owen, 2000, 148) and (Barak 2000, 20-1).

the democratisation challenges, requiring as they do a substantial workload for the political system and its institutions, it is highly debatable whether the country's institutions under the current consociational framework will be able to benefit from the opportunities democratisation has to offer.

Drawing on Lebanon as a case study, this thesis has critically investigated consociational theory in an attempt to examine whether the model of consociational democracy rule is able to prevent the outbreak of conflict in divided societies and ensure that stability in such a context continues to be created and maintained. The research has principally aimed to re-examine and re-evaluate the significance of Arend Lijphart's assertion pertaining to the causative relationship between consociational democracy and system stability in divided societies. In the end, it was shown that the model does not work as the theory suggests and worse, prevents the system from reaching political maturity. As a result, additional conflict-regulating mechanisms (such as those of external arbitration and excessive internal mediation) are needed as a means of assisting consociational devices.

While this thesis has attempted critically to investigate the consociational claim pertaining to the positive relationship between consociationalism and democratic stability, using Lebanon as a case study, it is not, and has not intended to be, an exhaustive study of either the theory of consociational democracy or the complex dynamics of the democratic process as it relates to the country. Nor does this thesis claim to have solved the unresolved debates of Lebanese politics. Indeed, further questions/issues (pertaining to consociational theory as well as Lebanon) that have not received enough scholarly attention deserve to be examined. For instance, in light of the classification of many political systems around the world as consociational and of the extensive literature on (and academic interest in) the dynamic globalisation process (and its inevitability), there is a need for further research on the nature of the relationship (i.e., the interplay) between consociationalism and globalisation and the impact of this interplay on the globalising consociational country. Such examinations have received little attention in the consociational literature. Indeed, for all countries in the world, the reality and the pressure of globalisation are an inevitability. At the same time, for many of them, plural societies, such as Lebanon, it is not readily possible to do away with the consociational model of rule, at least for the time being. Therefore, the extent and nature of responsiveness of consociationalism to the reality of globalisation seems to be an interesting dimension that allows Lijphart's claim of democratic stability to be re-examined through a new lens. This is so because globalisation constraints have an important bearing on the stability of the globalising country as globalisation tends to create societal stresses that seem to endanger a country's stability.

Indeed, the literature on globalisation mentions that a modernising country (plural or homogeneous) will come across, particularly in the short term, economic and social problems that may tend to bring instability to the country. This is so mainly because some aspects of globalisation are beneficial, while some effects are adverse, some people and groups benefit by it, and others experience bankruptcy, poverty and unemployment. Hence, if plural societies tend to be unstable, and when consociationalism perpetuates such divisions, and globalisation tends to have detrimental social impacts on stable societies and unstable ones, what are the prospects for stability and democratic stability for plural societies when all of these factors come into play? Indeed, threats to social stability may manifest themselves in the plural societies under examination in this thesis as a result of uncontrolled financial liberalisation, especially as foreign investors do not take into consideration sensitive issues in plural societies, such as the proper balance in development, neither sectorally, nor regionally (read the communal-religious dimension they take). The intersection of socio-economic and religious divisions is particularly problematic for the stability of the plural society and for peaceful communal coexistence.

If history is anything to go by, for example, the Lebanese record shows that social and class conflicts manifest themselves in religious clashes and tensions. As Hudson aptly puts it, 'in Lebanon, acute economic crises can explode into sectarian political conflicts' (Hudson 1999b, 36). Thus, in the Lebanese case, if a redistribution of benefits is a likely consequence of the globalisation process, will the prospective penetration of the much-needed DFI be delayed or hampered, as it might upset the existing confessionally-balanced allocation of economic power (as discussed in previous chapters)? It is necessary to ask whether the heavy involvement of political decision-making (and bickering) in such issues impedes the globalisation process due to the time it usually takes to reach political consensus.¹³ One may question how the globalisation process of the country is conducted through the consociational decision making system when the elites, it is presumed, are looking after the interests of their own groups and how this will affect the final political decision-making. Will sectarian interests determine the outcome, or will national interests somehow emerge? In the process, will this complex governance system impede the globalisation process and delay the competitive integration of Lebanon's economy in the global economy? Will this lengthy process discourage DFI? Because of the dominance of the sophisticated patron-client system over the role of the state, can the government be allowed to play a regulatory role in the economy, as a successful globalisation process prescribes? What are the necessary reforms that the Lebanese political economy would have to undergo if Lebanon is to integrate its economy competitively in the world

¹³ For instance, the renowned economist Kamal Hamdan mentions that the priorities of the previous three-year governmental economic programme were revised three times, still without having been clearly identified. He notes that,

economy? Can the Lebanese government undertake economic, administrative, judicial and state reforms (mainly in the health and education sectors)?

The extent of political responsiveness that the Lebanese consociational system of rule exhibits in the face of the demands made upon it by the dynamics of the globalisation process deserves examination. How adequate is the consociational structure of governance, with regard to its adaptability or inadaptability to the imperatives of the global environment? Will the consociational system impede the changes that appear to be crucial for the integration of Lebanon's economy in the global economy, among which can be cited structural reform, fiscal and monetary discipline, privatisation and an absence of political "meddling"? What are the prospects for "consociational globalising" Lebanon in this changing world? How well can the consociational system manage this type of global developments?

Lebanon is a late globaliser and has only lately taken reasonable steps in this direction. Indeed, it is currently making efforts to integrate its economy into the world economy since the costs of Lebanon's integration in the global economy are lower than the costs of its isolation. In other words, the assumption here is that the Lebanese economy has to be opened more to the outside world, as this is better for the stability of the country. Indeed, the rather significant global changes that are occurring in the nature of the flows of both capital and labour and in the level, quality and differentiation of labour are necessary for competition in today's global markets and cannot be ignored by the Lebanese government. Hence, the current progression and unfolding of the globalisation process under Lebanon's consociational system of rule calls for the need for future extensive examinations and inclusive inquiries pertaining to the consociationalism/stability relationship, precisely because the latter appears to be increasingly elusive, when globalisation constraints are considered. Especially when it comes to globalisation, the fragmentary information available to scholars is a major limitation in formulating an adequate assessment of the implications of the government's economic policies on stability. Lebanese consociationalism may need to be developed and elaborated in order to sustain such complex and dynamic processes. Indeed, the considerable immobilism and rigidity exhibited by the consociational model and the ensuing governmental paralysis raise questions whether the consociational model can cope adequately with exponential changes in the world order and approaching challenges of globalisation. Hence, further research should be undertaken into ways of elaborating on the consociational model so as to suit the globalisation reality. Indeed, one way of counterattacking such fragility and difficulties is to continuously elaborate the consociational model to suit the challenges and opportunities of

on the contrary, they have been revised a number of times to meet inter-sectarian and clientelist relations (Hamdan 2000, 70).

globalisation and the particularities of plural societies. In short, there is a need for research in this particular field to gain greater insight into the political governance challenges facing consociational globalisers.

Throughout this thesis, the discussion of the utility of the consociational model in the Lebanese context suggested that the consociational model of democracy was, in the absence of workable alternatives, the most likely form of government for Lebanon at least for the time being, in the sense that it emerges as a realistic response to what is possible to achieve within the prevailing domestic and regional situation. A question that arises is: In the light of the findings of this study, can one prescribe such a model for divided/deeply divided societies other than Lebanon?

Indeed, in the 21st century, all societies seem divided societies; many are deeply divided societies. Lebanon is one of them, a very complex society existing in a region with complex politics. In order for the consociational model to be applied to plural, unstable societies other than Lebanon, the findings of this thesis cast doubts as to the ability to move from a descriptive to a prescriptive realm, i.e., prescribing the Lebanese consociational model, as it is in its present form, to other divided/deeply divided societies, which are surely likely exhibit their own constraining features. For instance, Traboulsi has made the observation that 'Lebanon's political system is criminal because it constantly renews itself by dividing the Lebanese' (Traboulsi 2002). Similarly, Khazen has pointed out that 'Lebanon's sectarian democracy was designed to suit Lebanon's communal particularities. It was, so to speak, made for internal consumption and not for export' (Khazen 2000, 390). However, this is not to say that other plural (heterogeneous, divided and unstable) societies cannot benefit from the twin experiments of Lebanon with consociationalism. Indeed, just as Lebanon provides a rich testing field for the operability of the model, it likewise represents by extension a rich lesson field for the applicability of the model elsewhere.

As regards Iraq's plural society, this thesis argues that international, regional and local decision-makers can learn from Lebanon's lessons and experiences with consociational democracy.¹⁴ Indeed, there is wide consensus that the previous Iraqi regime was far from democratic, and its demise is seen as a salutary step. Against such a background, the likelihood of having a consociational system of rule appears to be very high, though far from being an ideal situation. Rather, it is seen as a realistic alternative when compared to the perils of majoritarianism. This appears understandable, as the long-term repressive Iraqi government has contributed to a great extent to the persistence of

¹⁴ For similar recent journalistic opinions, see Wissam S. Yafi, 'Democracy 101, lessons from Lebanon'. *DSO*, 26 April 2003; Paul Salem 'Lebanon's democratic lessons, part 1'. *DSO*, 17 June 2003; Paul Salem 'Designing democracy for Iraq, part 2'. *DSO*, 18 June 2003 and David Ignatius, 'Adopt Ghassan Salameh's plan'. *DSO*, 8 September 2003.

sectarian and ethnic loyalties as a result of group exclusion and oppression. Yafi advocates that Iraq should keep the executive positions as a free-of-sectarianism and institutionalising sectarianism in Parliament as a compromise (Yafi 2003). Salem, meanwhile, argues the opposite, suggesting that Parliament should be kept free of sectarian composition, while institutionalising communal representation at the decision-making level (Salem 2003a, Salem 2003b). Based on the Lebanese experiment, this thesis argues against the institutionalisation of any sort of communal representation, as this would encourage the politicisation of identities, which may otherwise recede. However, it seems that Salem's scenario appears wiser than Yafi's as issues of conflict will be particularly threatening to the stability of the country if executive decision-making includes group exclusion. This should not, however, mean that this should be institutionalised in the system through constitutional measures. Rather, it seems wiser to try to encourage the emergence of groups, according to Lijphart's recently introduced concept of self-determination. Indeed, the Iraqi situation presents an ideal opportunity to test the operability of Lijphart's self-determination approach to governance. In the end, it is hoped that this study of how Lebanon is governed will be worthwhile, and will offers insights into the governance of plural societies elsewhere, such as in Iraq.

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